

SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS

DOUGLAS
LIBRARY

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
AT KINGSTON



KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

T H E
Blessings of Polygamy

D I S P L A Y E D,

I N A N

AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS

T O T H E

REV. MARTIN MADAN,

Occasioned by His late Work, entitled

T H E L Y P H T H O R A,

O R,

A TREATISE ON FEMALE RUIN

Given in testimony of a wife's ruin, and he will be yet no less, Prov. ix. 18.

BY RICHARD HILL, ESQ.

L O N D O N.

Sold by J. MATTHEWS, in the Strand; C. DILLY, in the
Fleet-street, and by J. EDDOWES, in Shrewsbury.

M. DCC. LXXXI.

NO. 911, 173, 1154

DEDICATION.

T O

All good WIVES in the Kingdom,

The following Pages

ARE HUMBL Y DEDICATED

BY THEIR REAL FRIEND

THE AUTHOR.



T H E

Blessings of Polygamy, &c.

Jan. 15, 1780.

Rev. and dear Sir,

HOWEVER exalted my ideas of friendship may be, (and I hope I do not exceed the language of humility, when I say that I trust what little I know of religion has rather *refined* than *diminished* them) however great and unalterable may be my regard for you, a regard founded on many years experience of the real worth of the person on whom it is placed; however highly I may respect you as a man of abilities and a scholar; above all, however much I may honor and reverence you as a minister of that gospel from which alone we both look for salvation; yet,

B

where

6 *The Blessings of Polygamy, &c.*

where truth is concerned, I must forego every other consideration, and say with one of old,

Amicus Plato, Amicus Socrates, Magis Amica Veritas.

But why should I suppose I am acting contrary to friendship in thus publicly addressing you on the subject of your late work? With pleasure I call to mind the many happy seasons we have had together, when speaking of those delightful themes which will afford matter of joy and praise to the redeemed throughout eternity, how often I have been quickened and edified by your Christian conversation; how often comforted and directed by your judicious and seasonable advice; whilst on the other hand, you yourself have not disdained to hearken to the words, and have not despised the counsel of a friend, though so much below you in every gift both of nature and of grace. Let me not therefore harbor the thought that I can forfeit your esteem, because I tell you with all that sincerity and openness with which I have
always

8 *The Blessings of Polygamy, &c.*

to conclude that I mean well. In either case therefore, I hope there is nothing wrong in my undertaking; though I confess I have been long struggling with myself, before I could resolve thus publicly to take the field of controversy against you: I trust however, that in this combat, I shall make use of no other sword than *that of the Spirit, which is the word of God* [A], and then though (to use a familiar phrase) I should give you a *home thrust*, yet I doubt not but we shall make up the difference without a second on either side, and agree together in this, *That faithful are the wounds of a friend* [B].

I am sensible it will afford a singular pleasure to many, that we have thus entered the lists together. But let *such* unhappy persons enjoy *such* pleasure. It is of no better sort than that which the malice of Satan excites, or rather it is that which excites Satan himself, when he can cause *Judah to vex Ephraim, or Ephraim Judah*. But it is a melancholy consideration that

[A] Eph. vi. 17.

[B] Prov. xxvii. 6.

what will afford matter of malicious glee to the children of the wicked one, will prove the cause of heart-felt grief to the children of light.

Still truth is truth, and must not be given up, though Paul should withstand Peter, or though Paul and Barnabas should separate through the sharpness of the contention between them.—But I mention this by way of argument and allusion, not by way of comparison, at least so far as I myself am concerned.

I shall not attempt to follow you page by page, but at once *lay the axe to the root*, by striking at the foundation of what I take upon to be the leading principle or cornerstone on which you build the doctrine of Polygamy, viz. “That if God allowed a plurality of wives to his people under the Old Testament, he cannot have forbidden it to Christians under the New.” This idea the erroneouſness of which I shall endeavor to prove in various undeniable instances, has led you to offer the greatest

violence to almost every text of scripture you have produced from the gospels and epistles. Yet I bear you witness, that you have done this, not because you were unwilling to admit the divine testimony, but upon supposition that you were making the scripture consistent with itself, in order to prove the unison and harmony which subsist between the Old and New Testament.

We will readily admit that Christ came not to destroy the law; not to set up any new rule of conduct, any remedial law, or any more pure system of morals than that which was before revealed by God in the ten commandments. So far from it, he came to *fulfill the law*, to *magnify and make it honorable*, to restore it to its original perfection, and to remove the false glosses which the scribes and pharisees had put upon it; to bring back the laws relative to marriage and divorce to their original and primitive institution. Nor do I at all dissent from you in believing that all those parts of the ceremonial law, and of the Jewish polity which are of moral intend-

ment,

ment, are and must be of eternal obligation; “unless God be pleased either to repeal these laws, or to give any other in their stead, as his infinite wisdom sees good.” Observe, I lay an uncommon emphasis on these words, and therefore I repeat them. “Unless God be pleased either to repeal these laws, or to give any other in their stead, as his infinite wisdom sees good.” Which he certainly has a right to do, and frequently (as we shall soon make appear) *has* done, without the least impeachment of his own moral character, or without the least change in his own nature; forasmuch as the one grand design which he ever has in view, and in which he is *semper contentus*, *in* *se* *ipso*, *of* *turning*, is his own glory, and the good of his church and people.

I would not from hence be understood to insinuate that Polygamy was ever a part of the law of God. On the contrary, there is no command whatever which enforces it, or even leans towards it, throughout the whole Bible. No, not in any case what-

ever. Not even when a man had no issue by a first wife, or though he were joined to a woman of the *haughty and refractory disposition of a Vashti* [C]. Yet to men unmarried God himself frequently condescends to give directions for the choice of a wife, as he did by an immediate answer to the prayer of Abraham's servant when he obtained Rebecca for Isaac. So throughout the whole book of Proverbs, there are various instructions for the choice of a wife,

[C] A very amiable and sensible lady one of the best of wives, and best of mothers, made the following remark to me on the note in the first vol. of Mr. Madan's Treatise, p. 182—"I do not perceive (said she) that queen Vashti did any thing unbecoming a good and an obedient wife, in not coming to the feast at king Ahasuerus's command; so far from it, that fear of exposing her husband seems to have been the motive of her refusal; for it is expressly said, that the king's heart was then *merry with wine*, and the very message itself shewed, that she was sent for that he and his guests *might look on her beauty*; so that the modesty of the queen might well be shocked on the occasion, and she had great reason to fear, lest had she at this time presented herself to this royal but intoxicated assembly, the consequences of her coming would have been much worse, than of her staying away."

with

with the highest commendations of a good one, and the dreadful lot and condition of the poor man who has the plague and torment of a bad one. Yet throughout the whole, God speaks in the singular number (*wife*) and never in the plural (*wives*). Nay there is one passage, which if we give the words their plain, easy scope, (and I shall not attempt to twist or darken them by any interpretation of my own) will nearly amount to a positive injunction of Monogamy [D], and consequently to a direct prohibition of Polygamy. The words are these, *Drink waters out of thine own cistern; and running waters out of thine own well. Let not [E] thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers*

[D] For the benefit of the plain English reader I observe once for all, that Monogamy means the marrying or having only one wife at a time. Bigamy means having two wives at a time, and Polygamy (which Mr. Madan chiefly defends) having many wives at a time.

[E] Though I must confess myself to be no Hebraean, yet a friend of mine who has a critical knowledge of that language, assures me on the authority of the learned Mr. Kennicot, that this word (not) stands

14. *The Blessings of Polygamy, &c.*

runners of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own and not strangers with thee: Let thy fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind, and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee AT ALL TIMES, and be thou ravished always with her love [F].

But it is not my design in this place to produce texts of scripture against the doctrine of Polygamy. All I would insist upon is, that there never was any positive command of God which enjoined it, and that therefore it never was any part of the divine law. That he *permitted* it, either for the reasons that he permitted bills of divorcement to be given, or to prevent the

in some manuscripts; and indeed there is no making good sense of the passage without it; but on the contrary, it appears to be a contradiction of what goes before and what follows after, and the omission of it is exactly of the same kind, as you tell us the printer was guilty of, whom archbishop Laud fined so heavily in the star-chamber for leaving the same word [not] out of the seventh commandment.

[F] Prov. v. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Jews,

Jews, who were a particular and distinct people, from intermarrying with idolatrous nations, is not to be controverted; and that he blessed the persons and heard the prayers of his own people who practised it, and did not illegitimatize the offspring of those polygamous marriages is also no dispute. Still tolerance is no law, even at the time it is granted; and we make God the author of all sin, since no law could have existed without his permission, much less ought it to be extended to be construed as a law to after ages and people under different dispensation, and different circumstances. I will not, however, rest the issue on the distinction between a *permission* and a *command*; I will even go farther, though I cannot *allow* what never appears to have been the case, that God under the Old Testament ordained certain laws in favor of Polygamy. Still he who ordained those laws had an equal right to change or abrogate them as he thought fit and meet: and as his holy and sovereign will is the only rule of right and wrong, I shall now prove by several undeniable instances that what

is agreeable to the mind of God at one time, and even matter of duty in his creatures to comply with, may at another time be absolutely wrong and sinful.

The *first* instance I bring shall be adduced from that almost original command of God. *Be fruitful and multiply* [G]. Now it is most certain that this command must have been fulfilled by the marriages of nearest relations at the time it was given, and for several years afterwards, as also immediately after Noah's flood; and this without any sin whatever in the persons so marrying; but when the world was peopled and the reason for such marriages no longer subsisted, then God forbid them both to Jews and Gentiles as unlawful, wicked, and incestuous. But if we were to adopt your grand argument in defence of Polygamy on this occasion, then we must say, that "God himself having instituted or permitted an incestuous intercourse among the immediate descendants of Adam and Eve and of the generations of Noah,

[G] Gen. i. 28.

under that great primordial command *increase and multiply*, and having blessed the persons and heard the prayers of those who practised it, and having adopted their issue as legitimate, therefore incestuous marriages can never be sinful under the gospel, and he who presumes to say that a brother may not now lawfully marry his own sister, attempts to be wiser than Jehovah himself, adopts the principles of Mahomet, Cerinthus, and Socinus, and in fact sets God and his Son Jesus Christ at variance with each other." How nearly this is your own language upon much more slender proof of what you have advanced, let those who have read your book judge.

The *second* instance I mention in proof of what I have said, shall be taken from the alteration of the sabbath. *For the seventh day God rested from all the work which he had made, and he blessed and sanctified it* [11].

[11] Gen. ii. 2.

In conformity with this early institution of the sabbath as a day of rest, the ancient people of God the Jews, observed and hallowed the seventh day with the most rigid severity, and you yourself bring some terrible examples of God's jealousy over this law of the sabbath, as contained in the fourth commandment, and of his indignation against the breakers of it; particularly in the fearful case of the man who was ordered to be stoned to death for gathering a few sticks on the sabbath day [I].—But he *who is the Lord of Sabbath*, has thought fit to change his own institution; and the day on which he rose from the dead, viz. the first day of the week, is now the great Christian sabbath, as the seventh day was that of the Jews. Whether the Jewish sabbath were or were not typical of the Christian sabbath, has nothing to do with the present question. The sabbath day is plainly changed. A poor man may now as lawfully gather his sticks on a Saturday as on any other day, and none but a Jew or a

[I] Numb. xv. 32, 33, &c.

Salutarian would deny I had a right to. Nay even if he were to do it, I would not, especially if he were to give it to me. I do not suppose that the nature of the constitution of the Bible, that of the law, is that he would thereby give me wealth, or any name that would give me a right to participate in the property of the people, which I never was, or possibly shall be, under the Mosaic dispensation.

In the *2d* of the *11th* of *1777*, I went farther, and if we were to go to any particular circumstance, I should be compelled that to be done, which was my duty, which was to be done, and I did it. I did not mean to do it, and backed myself by the prohibition by the Assembly, and this was in the year 1777, and my wife after that, she was in the year 1777, if ever did this, or if the devil did, committed an act of adultery, and the curse of barrenness pronounced against the woman was, if he was guilty, as it read, *Levit. 20. 17.*

If a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness, they shall be childless. But if the elder brother died without issue, then it became a duty absolutely incumbent on the next brother to marry the widow, and to raise up seed unto his brother, and the disobedience to this law was punished with death in the case of Onan [K].

The *fourth* instance I produce is from Ezra's exhortation to the people and to the priests to put away their strange wives [L], which no doubt he did by the direction, or at least by the full approbation of God himself, for the order was given immediately after he had addressed God in the most solemn manner by confession, humiliation, and prayer. Yet from the very first institution of marriage, those whom God had joined together, no man could put asunder. And when any man and a virgin had become one flesh (according to your own

[K] Gen. xxxviii. 8, 9, 10.

[L] Ezra. x. 1, 2, &c. throughout.

interpretation of the text, Deut. xxii. 28. 29.) *He could not put her away ALL HIS DAYS, seeing he had humbled her.* You will say, that this command of Ezra respected idolatrous wives and such only, and therefore these marriages were void *ab initio*. I will grant your assertion, but then you cannot abide by it yourself without throwing down the grand pillar which supports your doctrine of Polygamy; viz. that when *any man whatever* has become one flesh with any maid or virgin, this union is an absolute marriage in the sight of God: *He cannot put her away all his days, seeing he hath humbled her.* I say therefore, you must either raze one of the principal foundation stones on which you build the doctrine of Polygamy; or otherwise, you must allow the truth of what I am attempting to prove, viz. that under particular cases and circumstances, God frequently permits and allows that, which under different cases and circumstances he disallows and forbids, and *vice versa*; still having nothing in view but his own glory and the good of his creatures;

so that he ever remains unimpeachable in his character of the God which changeth not, the same under the law, as under the gospel; the same *yesterday, to day, and for ever.*

Fifthly, Under the Jewish law bills of divorcement for other causes than adultery were permitted: by which the wife was dismissed from the house; and had liberty to marry another man; in which case, she could not return again to her first husband, Deut. xxiv. 1, 2, &c. [M]. But these divorces

[M] The words in our translation are just as follow, When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house.

And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's *wife.*

And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife;

voices were pronounced absolutely unlawful by Christ himself under the gospel; and whosoever put away his wife, and married another was deemed an adulterer; as was also the man who married her that was put away. This is clear from our Lord's own words to the pharisees when asking him of this matter. *They taught of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marryeth her which is put away doth commit adultery* [N].

As I shall have occasion in the sequel to consider this important scripture more at large, I shall only at present make some animadversions on a distinction which you

Her former husband which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is divorced: for that is abomination before the Lord, and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. ver. 1. 2. 3. 4.

[N] Matt. xix. 8. 9.

endeavor for obvious reasons to establish between the permission of Moses, and the permission of God himself in this matter of divorce. It is true indeed, our Lord says, “*Moses suffered you,*” but are we from thence to suppose, that God connived at what was sinful, because he either could not or would not thwart the will and pleasure of Moses? Is all scripture given by inspiration of God, or is it not? Did holy men of old speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, or did they not? Was Moses the vicegerent and legislator of God, or was he not? In a word, did he act by his own authority [O] or by that of Jehovah himself? I must certainly conclude that what was permitted or enjoined by the will of Moses, was permitted and enjoined by the will of God; and that to talk of Moses suffering a thing to be done which God did *not* suffer, is to set God and his own law-

[O] My friend has *almost* ventured to assert this, if not quite. His words are these “The only instance in which Moses acted by his *own* authority was in the matter of divorce.”

giver (or rather the executor of his own law) at absolute variance.—Our Lord says, *Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?* Are we therefore to conclude, that Moses gave the whole law by his own authority? We have just as much reason to do so, as to suppose that he gave one part of it by his own authority, whether we distinguish it by moral, ceremonial, or civil. But what puts the matter beyond all dispute is, that the whole of the divine law, in the very midst of which stands the part in question, is uttered in with the greatest solemnity, as containing the mind and will of God himself, delivered to his servant Moses, who it is said, was *appointed of all things, for the use of the people over whom he was appointed.* And the conclusion of it is summed up in the following most striking words. *THE LORD THE GOD HATH COMMANDED THEE to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.*

It is therefore past all doubt, that the law of God, and the law of Moses, in every iota and punctilio, were one and the same; and that Moses in no case whatever suffered any thing which the divine will did not authorise him to suffer: Moses could no more have permitted the custom of writing a bill of divorcement, than he could have suffered the divorced woman, who had been defiled by another man, to return to her first husband, which he by the very same authority which enjoined every other part of the law, strictly prohibits in the following words: *And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife. Her former husband which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the Lord: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, Deut. xxiv. 4, 5.*

I conclude all I have to say on this head, by reminding, that when our Lord says, *My kingdom is not of this world; for hearts fear me, but ye despise me,* it is just the same as if he had said, "Because of the hatred which ye have, this custom will not stand by the law of Moses;" but to suppose that the Mosaic constitution is independent of God's authority, is to suppose that the will of God is not his wisdom from the counsel of the Holy Spirit, yet that he is a law-giver independent of the laws of morality, which he would not at first have done, had he intended to make the law of old bondage, but to put the people out of the bondage, as well as he could.—Besides, if the laws of the Jews are once set up, in what can we then give favorite of men, we are not to wonder, if the words of Paul or Peter, or James, or John, be thought less of, in preference than the words of Christ; which would soon make way for the introduction of every abominable and pestilent heresy; as we know it already has done among many, who talk of the authority of the four gospels, in a strain

strain as if they were to be regarded with higher veneration than the rest of the inspired writings.

Where it suits your own purpose, you find fault with bishop Patrick, for saying, “Moses himself supposes as much;” which you observe, “looks as if Moses was speaking by his own wisdom;” which the bishop did not at all mean to infer. But where it militates against your plan, and the bishop says, that “divorce (under the law) was allowed of God,” there you “*take the liberty* to observe, that it is best to keep to the expression of scripture, and that our blessed Saviour does not say, that *God* allowed divorce, but *Moses allowed or permitted it.*” However in both cases, the bishop speaks on the supposition that what the legislator permitted, the Lawgiver had authorized, and that God and his law were in perfect union.

Before I quit this subject I shall only observe, that the divorced wives here, were not *idolatrous* wives, and yet they were suffered

suffered to be put away, and even to marry another man, living the first husband; which is a full answer to your objection concerning the command given by Ezra to the people to put away their *strange* wives. The same may be said of that passage, *Exod. xxi. 10. If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage shall be not diminish.*—Moses is here speaking of the very particular case of a man who should sell his daughter to be a maid servant with a master who *loved her*, or as it stands in the text, who *dealt deceitfully with her*.—And yet though he had been *one flesh with her*, God gave him liberty to put her away *if she pleased him not*, and to marry another.—Whatever this scripture may prove *for* you, it certainly proves this *against* you, viz. That the law, which declared that where *a man married a maid, and lay with her, he might not put her away all his days*, was not in all cases invariable; yet this is one of the principal texts on which you ground the doctrine of Polygamy, and argue in defence of it from the *invariable* nature of the law of God.

God.—But your grand mistake seems to lie in confounding the moral, with the judicial law, and in not perceiving that the latter, though blended with many excellent moral institutions, cannot possibly subsist, neither was intended to subsist in any other nation than that peculiar one for whose use it was framed. Such were the laws relative to theft, restitution, damages, trespasses in cases of trust, usury, witchcraft, oppressing of strangers, bribes, punishment of servants, &c. &c. &c. which are mentioned in the 22d and 23d chapters of Exodus, as well as in the book of Deuteronomy, and particularly the law of retaliation, which has so much in it of moral intendment, that a late writer in a pamphlet intitled “A Letter to the New Parliament,” seems almost as anxious for its revival, as my friend Mr. Madan is for the revival of Polygamy, and *endeavors* to prove that our Saviour never meant to abolish it. Yet there is no reason to doubt from our Lord’s own authority, *Matt. v. 38, 39*, that this law is now superseded for that
more

more benign and evangelical system which enjoins us to return good for evil.

Other instances might be brought, but let these suffice: and indeed I think if I had mentioned only one of them, that one would have been sufficient to establish my position, that God consistent with his own invariable nature and attributes, may, and does frequently permit, and even ordain that to be done, under some case and circumstance, which under other he absolutely forbids as wrong and sinful. That therefore, notwithstanding his law may have allowed and did allow Polygamy to have been practiced by his own people under the law, (though he never gave the least shadow of a command for it), in order to preserve them as a peculiar people and distinct nation, and to fulfil his royal promise, *that they should be as the stars of heaven for multitude* [P]; yet these ends being

[P] It is a maxim founded on truth and on general experience, that the same customs in one country may have a quite different effect in another, according

ing now answered, God under the gospel, has been pleased to reduce the laws of marriage to their original institution, when he brought the first woman to the first man, and commanded that a man from thenceforth should leave his father and his mother, and should cleave unto his wife, and they twain should be one flesh; upon which

ing to the different laws, genius, and circumstances of the people, and according to the different ages of the world in which they live. Upon which account, though Polygamy may have been friendly to population among the Jews, and might without much inconvenience subsist with their political government, yet it would certainly have a very different effect in the present period among professors of Christianity, and even among the modern Jews, as well as be attended with a long chain of evils, of which the Israelites of our day seem fully sensible, by having given up the practice of Polygamy, and by contenting themselves with one wife. And indeed, when our Lord himself first made his appearance upon earth, a Polygamist was scarcely to be found amongst the Jews; which is a very sufficient reason, why in his public ministrations he gave no particular commands to his hearers *to put away all their wives except one*, when perhaps not one of those hearers who received his testimony, had any more wives than one to put away.

account

account Polygamy is so far from being allowed under the New Testament, that it ranks under the general name of adultery, as I shall endeavor to evince, by referring several passages of holy writ to their plain easy natural sense, which I am heartily concerned to avow, have been dreadfully obscured and misinterpreted by the forced construction you have put upon them; but before I do this, I shall speak of the very dreadful and shocking consequence which must inevitably attend the establishment of your plan.

THE Jews (as I before observed) being a distinct people, and separated by the nature of their laws and worship from all other nations under heaven, their great Lawgiver in his directions given to Moses so suited their laws and government to their peculiar situation, and their situation to their laws and government, that their laws were enforced without any other difficulty than what the refractory disposition of that people sometimes occasioned, though in general they submitted themselves

selves peaceably to the decisions of Moses, and were unanimous in suffering those penalties and punishments to be inflicted on offenders which their laws enjoined; and when they were not so, God in a miraculous manner frequently interposed to the destruction of the disobedient. As they were under a particular institution by their judicial law in other respects, so they were in matters relative to marriage, divorce, seduction, whoredom, adultery, &c. not that the nature of these could at all alter, or that be sinful or not sinful in a Jew which was not the same in another person, but there were certain temporal punishments annexed to the breach of these laws, which did not subsist among other nations, and also certain miraculous methods of trying and detecting the guilty, which were only known among themselves.—Such was *the law of jealousy* [Q] to discover the unfaithfulness

[Q] *Numb.* v. 14. And if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled; or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled:

faithfulness of a wife. And somewhat a-kin to it, (though not to be called miraculous)

15 Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal, he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon, for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the Lord.

17 And the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and of the dust that is under the table the priest shall take, and put it into the water.

18 And the priest shall let the woman tell by the Lord, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial on her hands, which is the jealousy-offering, and the priest shall have of her and the bitter water that causeth the curse.

19 And the priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not come aside to another, nor to another instead of thy husband, then shalt thou be free from the bitter water that causeth the curse.

20 But if thou hast come aside to another instead of thy husband, and it thus be detected, and thou hast lain with thee beside thine husband.

21 Then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman,

36 *The Blessings of Polygamy, &c.*

culous) was *the cloth of virginity*, whereby to make known the reality of a maid [R].

woman, The Lord make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell ;

22 And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make *thy* belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot : And the woman shall say, Amen, Amen.

23 And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot *them* out with the bitter water.

24 And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse ; and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, *and become* bitter.

25 Then the priest shall take the jealousy-offering out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before the Lord, and offer it upon the altar.

26 And the priest shall take an handful of the offering, *even* the memorial thereof, and burn *it* upon the altar, and afterward shall cause the woman to drink the water.

27 And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass *that* if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband ; that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her *and become* bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall

maid [R]. But as these laws now no longer subsist, and evidently ended with the whole external Jewish policy, How would it be possible to adopt your system among Christians in the present day, so far only as the knowledge of virginity is concerned.—Suppose any artful woman who had a mind to marry some rich or great man, were to complain to any magistrate, or in any court of law, that he had *enticed her* and *kumbled her*, and therefore she had a claim upon him to make her his wife; suppose

shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people.

28 And if the woman be not defiled, but be a virgin, then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.

29 This is the law of jealousnes, when a wife hath aside to *another* instead of her husband and he doth see.

30 Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the Lord, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law.

31 Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity.

[R] See this also expressed at large, Deut xxii. ver. 13 to 22

twenty more were to do the same; how could the poor man help himself upon your plan? He must marry them all, and provide for them all, *seeing he hath humbled them, he may not put them away all his days.*

Again, let it be supposed, that any lascivious man who was tired of his first wife, hankered after variety, and wished to take another, or two, or three, or four, (for your doctrine allows of no limitation) he has nothing to do but to walk about a *wife-seeking*, make his proposals wherever lust and inconstancy shall suggest, and if the woman consent, neither he nor she commit any sin; *she has given herself up to the man of her choice, who has humbled her,* and therefore they are man and wife in the sight of God, without any marriage ceremony whatever.—But *he may not put her away all his days*, and he must *provide for her*——But suppose he is poor and cannot provide for her [S]; still *he may not put her*

[S] I am acquainted with a worthy good man, who in the honesty and integrity of his heart, having been

led away, so he and his wives must starve together, though most women in such a predicament it is to be presumed, would sally forth into the streets and supply their wants by prostitution, especially as nothing could be expected at home but quarrel, jealousies, and brawlings among the rest of the female, and at best, dissatisfied looks from a nauseated husband: So that if our streets abound with prostitutes, and our streets with bullets at present, will your system to be universally adopted, London for its filthiness would surpass even Corinth itself, where Polygamy was practised without restraint, and where we have your own authority to assert that in the temple of Venus alone there were 1000, if not 2000 common whores.

Even among the Jews themselves who were curbed by such severe laws, what difficulties attended the practice of Poly-

been led away by the specious reasonings of *T. de Thora*, seriously meditated a design of abridging the book *to give away among the poor.*

gamy in the most regular and religious families! Witness the tyrannical authority of Sarah over Hagar, in the family of Abraham.—The disputes between Rachel and Leah in the family of Jacob; and the vexatious and taunting behavior of Penninah towards Hannah, in the family of Elkanah.

Is the case a whit better among the Mahometans, where Polygamy is established by law [T], than it was among the Jews.

To

[T] Your observation that the prohibition of Polygamy hinders the Turks from embracing Christianity, only proves, That the religion of Jesus Christ is far too pure and spiritual for the vitiated palate of a Mussulman; but it is no better argument for the toleration of Polygamy, than it would be for the toleration of drunkenness or covetousness, because if these sins could be dispensed with, many a miser or bottle companion might be made converts to Christianity. You also bring a quotation from Lord Kaim's History of Man, Vol. II. p. 89, where it is asserted, "That among the most zealous Christians in the kingdom of Congo, Polygamy is in use as formerly, when they were pagans; and sooner than give it up, they would renounce Christianity." But if the fact be true (which I much doubt) I cannot help thinking

To sooth the jealousy of the debauched Mussulman, and to prevent the apparent mischiefs which would be the effect of a plurality of wives under his own roof, the poor defenceless beings are generally locked and barred up in separate apartment, and none permitted to approach them but their antiquated *Duenna*, who being pitiful fears of exciting the passion of love in others, is suffered to go abroad herself.—But if Polygamy were ever to have the sanction of law in this land which God forbid the wives of Christians must either be imprisoned like many among the Turk, or else they must be suffered to dwell together under the same roof in their husband's house; in either case, what evils must follow! What tyrannies to the husband! In the former, in the latter what jealousies and quarrellings among the wives, inso-much that all domestic peace must be bid adieu to. But above all, how is the case of the first wife to be pitied, especially if

ing that these *most zealous Christians* never had any Christianity to renounce.

she be of a meek, amiable, and affectionate disposition, when she is eye witness to the fact of others being received to her beloved husband's bed, and finds his love towards her to grow cool in proportion as it becomes warm towards a stranger? We often see the dire effects of jealousy on the most distant suspicion of unfaithfulness; but when that suspicion is exchanged for certain knowledge, what may we expect, or rather what may we *not* expect as the consequence!

But are matters likely to be at all more peaceable among a numerous brood of children by different wives than among the wives themselves? What disputes and wranglings about property, what dissensions among nearest relations must inevitably take place! infomuch, that one half of the men that are born must be brought up lawyers, to squabble about the *meum* and *tuum* of the other half; a large addition must be made to the courts of judicature in Westminster-hall, and county assizes at the *nisi prius* bar must last great part of the year.

It

It may be said, did not God know and foresee all this? Certainly he did know and foresee it, and therefore has most wisely forbidden the practice of Polygamy under the New Testament dispensation. Among the Jews these inconveniencies were not likely, at least not so likely to happen, circumscribed as they were by their own peculiar laws, and in every dispute about right and inheritance, subject to the immediate decision of Moise, or those appointed by him.

Again, Were Polygamy to be established by law in this kingdom, so far from encouraging honorable population, it would necessarily put the greatest check to it; since very few women of a modest, gentle, and affectionate spirit, and such only are fit for wives, would ever dare to embark in wedlock, lest the husband should take another wife, or as many more as he pleased, and thereby the first and only true wife, be deprived of that share in her husband's love, and that mutual union of heart with him which alone can make her life happy,
and

and without which in proportion as her own love for him was great, her misery must be great also. And can that being deserve the name of a man, much less of a husband, much less still of a Christian, who could bear to see the amiable wife of his bosom in such a situation? Yet you must allow that this case might be a very common one, if Polygamy were tolerated by law. It is true, some bold, boxing Amazonians might be found who would not be afraid to venture themselves with any man, but then this would be upon the idea that *vi et armis* they should be able to turn all after-comers out of the house, and by force, if not by argument, speedily cure the husband of his love of Polygamy, and at the same time administer to him some wholesome discipline well enough suited to the nature of his crime.

Again, Suppose the legislature were really to take up the subject of your book, and to pass an act in favor of Polygamy; what would be the language of all the virtuous wives in the kingdom; “ I’m sure,
 “ if

“ if my husband thinks of taking another
“ wife, I shall heartily wish I had never
“ married.” “ Ah says another (who is
“ unmarried, I think the men will not find
“ it an easy matter to get good wives now
“ a days; every honest woman will be
“ afraid of having her nose put out of
“ joint, by the introduction of a second
“ lady into the family, therefore for my
“ part I am determined to live single.”—
Hence an immediate decrease of honorable
population [U].

But

[U] I had not put this above to paper more than a few days, before what I had conceived as theory, was confirmed by practice.—I have just had a letter from a friend, wherein he tells me that the match between a certain young gentleman, and a certain very amiable young lady, had been entirely broken off on his side, on information she had received, that the gentleman who ~~was~~ proposed to her was an adherent of *Teolyphtha va*.—Now suppose this young gentleman were to propose to several others, and were for the same reason to receive the same answer from all. What must he do? no woman will have him, for fear he should think himself at liberty to give his affections and his person to another. Hence he be-

comes

But let us suppose the act just now passed. The very next week how would our daily prints abound with paragraphs of treaties of marriage that were on foot being broken off, unless the husband would enter into articles not to marry any more wives whilst the first was living.—Hence again a sudden check to marriage, and thereby to honorable population.

Honorable population every where slackening its pace, seduction with all her dreadful train of deceit, abortive potions, and child murder will necessarily come in with gigantic strides, especially as it will be put in practice even by married men, with so much greater ease in proportion as the unhappy female is deluded under the specious notion of marriage. This idea

comes tempted to commit whoredom, seduction, adultery, and what not. I do not indeed suppose that this will be the case with the young gentleman in question, of whom I entertain a very high opinion; but human nature is human nature still, and when checked in an honorable way, will seek gratification in one that is dishonorable.

will

will so far operate on those women who are in a lower station of life towards their superiors, that an uncorrupted mind here will be a *rota axis* indeed; but the more like a black *faun* the more likely to escape [X]. Besides, what coquetting and flirting will be carried on in every affable what nightly walkings out! what *travellers* and *deucers* will there be between married men and young unmarried women! And are there not enough of these abominations practised already, that you, my dear friend must endeavor to wipe off the little shame which yet attends them; and in a manner authorize them before the world under the sanction of your respectable pen? Who will thank you for this course? Will virtuous wives? Will careful husbands? Will any parents who have the good of their children at heart? None I believe will think themselves indebted to you, unless it be the reverend editor of the Morning Herald for the many pretty, I might rather say, *snatty* paragraphs, which

[X] *Rota axis in terris nigisque Juvulana nigra.*
the

the legal adoption of your system would furnish him with; or perhaps some rich antiquated maids and old widows with large jointures, who will now no longer stick on hand, as their fortunes will be very convenient to support the younger wives who have none.

Lewdness and seduction with their concomitant miseries are now in some degree confined within a certain circle, which is distinguished by the too gentle appellation of *the gallant world*; but blessed be God, even in this degenerate day, there are very many families to be found where harmony and mutual love prevail; yet your scheme (however undesignedly), actually tends to introduce all the evils of corruption and discontent among those, who remain yet uncontaminated by the vicious customs of this wanton and luxurious age; insomuch that every habitation where peace at present dwells, is liable to be turned into a temple of discord, if not into an human slaughter house, by wives cutting their own, each others, or their husband's throats, or hang-
ing

ing or drowning themselves in fits of frantic jealousy.—Methinks, I am sitting quietly in my parlour in London, and am suddenly roused by the prodigious vociferation of two grim females of the right St. Giles's stamp, one on each side the street, and each of them holding one hand to her ear, crying, "Here is a full and true
" account of two most horrid, barbarous,
" bloody, and inhuman murders, which
" were committed on Friday night last,
" upon the bodies of Sir John Fickle, Bart.
" and his new wife, to whom he had been
" married only one week; which sad deed
" was done by his first wife, who afterwards
" stabbed herself with the same knife
" with which she murdered her own husband
" and his other lady, whilst they
" were asleep in bed together. Alas the
" true copy of a letter to her own mother,
" which her ladyship left upon her table
" the night before she committed the
" murders, giving her own reasons for
" what she was about to do."

We may suppose the letter to run in the following words :

My dearest mother,

“ YOU will shudder indeed when
 “ I tell you, that before to-morrow morn-
 “ ing neither I myself, my husband nor
 “ his other wife will have a being in this
 “ world.—But my resolution is now unal-
 “ terably fixed. You are my witnesses, God
 “ is my witness, that I have made Sir
 “ John a loving, faithful, and obedient
 “ wife for the space of six years. But his
 “ late marriage with Miss *Ogleman*, ren-
 “ ders me distracted. O jealousy ! who
 “ can live with thee in their bosom ?—I
 “ cannot—I am desperate—Execration on
 “ the man who first brought Polygamy
 “ into this nation ! Dearest mother, take
 “ care of my three sweet children which I
 “ have had by Sir John, to you the poor
 “ innocent babes look up for help. My
 “ hand shakes so much that I can hardly
 “ say, farewell—farewell.

“ From your affectionate daughter,

“ *CONSTANTIA FICKLE.*”

Friday Night, 12 o'Clock.

I appeal to common sense, I appeal more particularly to those who have the finest and most delicate sensations; I appeal to those who know themselves, and who are experimentally and religiously acquainted with the workings of human nature, whether there be any thing throughout this tragical story, which wears the face of improbability, when Polygamy should be established by law.

In some part of your book indeed, after having enlarged on the Blessings of Polygamy, your eyes seem opened to see the awful train of mischiefs which must unavoidably attend its introduction; and you would almost confine it to the single instance of a man with a woman who has been debauched by him. Where that man is *unmarried* he is certainly in conscience bound to make the woman his wife; and in every instance of this sort which comes before me as a magistrate, I always lay this down as matter of duty before the reputed father of a child: but when the answer returned is, "Please your Worship,

"I have

“ I have reason to believe that I am not
 “ the first man who has been concerned
 “ with her ;” then, what can I say ? for if
 that be a truth, and he marries the wo-
 man, he is not only linked for life to ano-
 ther man’s whore, but according to your
 own system, to another man’s wife, and so
 lives and dies in adultery.

But suppose the man be already a
 married man, then certainly his crime be-
 comes much more heinous in the sight of
 God (though the purport of your book is
 to make him guilty of no crime at all,
 provided he persists in what he has done,
 and takes the woman to live with him),
 and by the Mosaic law he was to be stoned
 to death as an adulterer : however, you
 will not allow this to have been the fact,
 unless the woman were also a married wo-
 man ; and in that case, you lament that the
 punishment of death is not now inflicted
 by our laws. That pecuniary fines for da-
 mages, are not in this case, a punishment
 adequate to the offence, I readily allow ;
 but if the dread of the eternal vengeance
 of

of God (which was typified by temporal punishments under the judicial law) will not deter men from these crimes. I know not what will.—From the conduct of our Lord with the pharisees, when they brought to him the woman taken in adultery, it appears clear to me, that under the gospel, he *indirectly* at least, prohibited that either party in such case should suffer death, either by stoning or otherwise, as they were to do by the severity of the Jewish law; and as that man did by the extreme rigor of the same law, who was found gathering sticks on the sabbath day.

But I find I am deviating from my subject; in the discussion of which I was remarking, that in some part only at least, you yourself seem to be sensible of the mischiefs which must necessarily attend your scheme, that you only defend it in some rare instances. Then, why in the name of God did you write *The Apostles*? Why cause all the dissensions you have caused in the religious world? Why give such cause of joy and triumph to those

who treat every thing serious with contempt? Why grieve your friends? Why strengthen the hands of your enemies?—In any view let me repeat the question of my private letter to you—*cui bono scribere?*

Again, Were your plan to be universally adopted, I am persuaded, that so far from diminishing the legion of harlots that now swarm among us, it would greatly add to their number; and that almost every private house where the husband was a Polygamist, would be little better than a stew or brothel among the wives, who would certainly plead the inconstancy of the man they had married, in excuse for their own; for-as-much as he had first violated the conjugal tie, and disobeyed the apostle's command, by withholding those duties which equally and reciprocally bind the parties to each other, and to themselves alone, in the plainest terms which words can express. “ To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevo-

“ benevolence, likewise the wife unto the
“ husband. The wife hath not power of
“ her own body, but the husband: and
“ likewise also the husband hath not power
“ of his own body, but the wife [Y].
“ Defraud

[Y] I am under the necessity of observing, that whenever my learned friend finds an argument to be more than a match for him, he attempts to treat it with more than ordinary contempt. This draws off the attention of the reader to the assertion of the author, and thereby he is apt to overlook all the force of the reasoning which is presented to his view. Among these arguments which Mr. Madan thinks ought to be treated with this sovereign contempt, is that drawn from the words of St. Paul. “ That a man ought not to have a plurality of wives, because the apostle all along restrains the number to ONE ONLY.” His words are these. “ To say that this text forbids Polygamy, because the word wife is in the singular number is mere trifling, as much so, as contending that a man is to love but one neighbour, because it is said, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, not *neglecting*; or that he shall keep but one servant, because it is said, who art thou that judgest another man’s servant.” But supposing this argument more just than it is, still is not Mr. Madan aware that it is one of that sort which prove too much, as it may with equal justice be urged why

“ Defraud ye not *one the other*, except it
 “ be *by consent* for a time, that ye may give
 “ yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come
 “ together again, that Satan tempt you not
 “ for your incontinency.” In all these texts
 there is just the same liberty given to the
 wife to be false to the husband’s bed, as to
 the husband to be false to that of his wife.
 Should he therefore presume to take to
 himself any other woman (except in such
 cases where the law admits of divorce)
 might not the injured wife most justly
 and most scripturally complain, and say,
 “ My husband to whom I have surrendered
 “ my hand, my heart, and my person, no
 “ longer treats me agreeable to those so-
 “ lemn vows by which at the time of
 “ marriage, he pledged himself to me,
 “ and I to him. That benevolence which
 “ the scripture enjoins from him to me I
 “ seldom partake of; he claims an exclu-

a wife should have more husbands than one, as well
 as why a husband should have more wives than one.
 But indeed it cannot be urged in either case, for there
 is such a reciprocal appropriation in the text, as
 binds the man to the woman alone, and the woman
 to the man alone.

“ five power over me, but in direct oppo-
“ sition to the apostolic declaration, he
“ denies that I have the same power over
“ him, and therefore he defrauds me of the
“ rights of the marriage bed, by bestow-
“ ing his affection on other women, which
“ I am left to burn with jealousy, or pine
“ with disappointed love.”

I can indeed conceive it possible for a woman to have some kind of delusion, that she would not choose to make the complaint of this sort even to her most intimate female friend, but that she is the more to be pitied on that account, as there is certainly nothing contained in it, which any woman of the most refined sentiments might not make even to God himself. However, though there might be here and there, such a weak, passive female to be found, yet I should judge, without censuring the sex, that they are not very numerous, but that multitudes under the above-mentioned treatment, could neither maintain their chastity, nor withhold their rage; so that revenge and prostitution,

tion, seem to be the natural twin children of every polygamous intercourse.

It is but a short while ago, that a poor destitute woman applied to me for a letter of recommendation to be admitted a patient in the Lock Hospital, and urged in excuse for the bad disease she had contracted, that her husband had for some time past cohabited with another woman. It immediately occurred to me that this man was a true polygamist, or rather a bigamist, without the superstitious intermeddling of a priest. And that my friend, with his dedication to the governors of the Lock, Magdalen, and Misericordia, ought also to have preferred a petition moving that against Polygamy should be established by law, they would enlarge their wards and engage an additional number of surgeons.

But it is an affront to the clear language of the apostle in the texts cited from the seventh chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, to attempt any explanation of them,

them, every word carries with it peripetuity and conviction, infomuch that one might think it were as easy to establish the doctrine of transmigration as of Polygamy from any part of the chapter; nay, much more easy, for it says nothing against transmigration, but says every thing which can be said against Polygamy: how then you could imagine that these texts or any of them speak only of a prevailing custom among the Corinthians of lending out their wives is to me inconceivable. Surely to use your own language, this is to make scripture speak any thing or nothing, or every thing, just as suits our own fancy. But neither will this forced interpretation stand, for in order to adopt it, you are obliged to change the word $\piορνειας$ which is very properly translated *fornication*, (or fornications) and to render it adultery, saying that it includes all sort of uncleanness. But why must the word $\piορνειας$ which comes directly from $\piορνη$ a harlot, be construed adultery rather than fornication? the reason is plain, because simple fornication could not be committed by the custom of lending

lending

lending out wives, so you must either give up your sense of the text, or we must grant you that *πορνεία* in this place means adultery, and cannot mean fornication.— But I have still one objection to make against your interpretation; which is, that it intirely destroys the force of the apostle's reasoning in urging marriage as a remedy against the danger of celibacy. Of this you are aware, and therefore you will not allow this to be the drift of his argument. However, let us look back to the beginning of the chapter.

“ Now concerning the things whereof ye
 “ wrote unto me; it is good for a man not
 “ to touch a woman. Nevertheless to avoid
 “ fornication, (*ἐξ ἧς πορνεία*) on account of
 “ fornications, let every man have his own
 “ wife, and every woman her own husband.”
 It is most clear that St. Paul from the 1st to the 10th verse, is addressing himself to unmarried people, and to widows, advising continency as best suited to that distressed state of the church, if they were able to bear it; else he exhorts them to marry,
 and

and in case they should, he adds some directions for their conduct when married; after which he sums up the whole of what he had said in the following words: "I say, therefore, [which word *therefore* has certainly a reference to what goes before] I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I, but if they cannot contain let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn."

In the tenth verse and not before, he turns his discourse to the married, and addresses them only. "And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord. Let not the wife depart from her husband, &c. &c."

All this is as plain as simple language can make it. How then you could possibly apply those words, *Let every man love his own wife, and every woman her own husband*, as a prohibition to those who had neither wives nor husbands to lend out, is to me most astonishing; but I cannot help saying

saying it is such a palpable perversion of sense and scripture as I hardly ever before met with. Yet even if this far fetched interpretation were to be allowed, it is as much a command to the wife not to lend out her husband, as to the husband not to lend out his wife: therefore take it which way you will it is big with absurdity.

But let us hear what you have to offer in defence of your opinion. I will transcribe your own words. “ Those who re-
 “ present the apostle as addressing himself
 “ to single persons, and advising them to
 “ marry to avoid fornication, make him
 “ guilty of evident tautology—for the
 “ eighth verse is expressly addressed to the
 “ unmarried and widows, &c. &c. vol. I.
 “ p. 233.” So it is, as also every verse
 before it: therefore here is no tautology,
 for the apostle is speaking all along to the
 unmarried.

Again, you add, “ The very terms (of
 “ the second verse) shew it to be addressed
 “ to married persons; for how could the
 “ apostle

“ apostle say to a single man—let him
“ have *ἔχειτω*, retain *γυναικα ἑαυτου*, his wife ;
“ or to a single woman—let her have, i. e.
“ keep to—*τω ιδιοι αιδου*, her own husband?
“ The immediate connection of this verie
“ with the three following, which can be-
“ long to *married people only*, is another
“ strong argument for the truth of this
“ observation.”——But I cannot allow it
to be any argument at all ; and I appeal to
every one who has the use of their eyes and
reason, whether every one of those veries
which you say belong to *married people only*,
do not belong to *unmarried people only*.
—For first the verb *ἔχειτω* will bear no such
sense as you have put upon it—“ Let her
“ retain or keep to,”—and yet if it would
bear it, you have actually introduced it in
favor of Monogamy instead of Polygamy ;
for it stands in the original as a direction
to the man as well as to the woman, and
therefore, if you will translate one part of
the verie, “ Let the wife *keep to* her huf-
“ band,” you are under the necessity of
translating the other part, “ Let the huf-
“ band *keep to* his wife,” for the Greek
word

word ($\epsilon\chi\epsilon\lambda\omega$) is the same in both parts, therefore by endeavoring to make it speak what you wish in the one place, you have made it speak what you do not wish in the other place. How you will get out of this difficulty I know not, unless you can follow the example of your old friend Whittington, Lord-mayor of London, with his six bells, and persuade yourself and readers that by the *found* of this same word $\epsilon\chi\epsilon\lambda\omega$ you are sure it means something very different, when addressed to a male than it does when addressed to a female, which will be literally *ringing changes*.—But as I observed above, the expression will not admit of the construction you have put upon^e.—*Let her retain or keep to*—but the plain signification of the word is *let her have*, or *let him have*: and would any man in the world, who knew what sense or grammar meant, say to a married man, Let him have a wife? or to a married woman let her have an husband? but the verb being in the imperative mood is plainly a command to *have* that which they have not already.

Secondly,

Secondly, If a tender parent were going to marry a son or a daughter, would he not give them directions whilst they were yet single, for their conduct after marriage, such as "Love your wife," "Behave well to your husband." In like manner St. Paul exhorting the unmarried who have not the gift of continency, to the use of the conjugal bed in order to avoid fornication, adds, "let every man have his own wife, let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence, likewise the wife unto the husband. The husband has not power of his own body but the wife. The wife has not power of her own body but the husband. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves unto fasting and prayer, and come together again that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Here is sense and reasoning in the apostle's language, if we suppose him to be addressing himself to the unmarried; but what sense or reasoning can be discovered, or where is the remedy he proposes against fornication, if we consider

consider him as speaking to those who are married already, in a way of exhortation not to lend out or interchange their wives? Give me leave to remind my learned friend who did not use to be averse to a little pleasantry, that whilst he is condemning our laws for the power they have committed to the priests of confirming marriages, he himself is claiming the authority of marrying half the church of Corinth; for I am sure that all those to whom St. Paul addresses himself from the first to the tenth verse, were ever esteemed unmarried persons, till that same good friend of mine coupled them together by his late interpretation of those texts.

I must now observe, that your labored criticism upon the words *του ιδιου ανδρα*—*her own proper husband*, allowing it its full scope, has the same misfortune attending it as your construction of the word *εχθω* viz. it makes more against Polygamy than in favor of it, by not proving what you would have it prove, and by proving what you would not have it prove: for it implies

plies such a peculiar right and property which the woman has in that one man, as no other woman has or can have, inasmuch that he is emphatically called *her own husband*, or *her own man*; which is certainly a much greater proof of the unlawfulness of his taking any other woman, than if the word had been in the feminine gender, and had been applied to the wife. I am therefore happy on this occasion to take your own word, and heartily agree with you, “that as all scripture is given “ by inspiration of God, and the Holy “ Ghost speaketh nothing in vain, there “ is a weighty reason in giving the epithet “ *his*, to the husband,” that no man might ever suppose he had any power over his own body, so as to think himself at liberty, to give the use of it to any other woman, but to her alone, who is so exclusively stiled by the apostle *HER OWN PROPER HUSBAND*.

After all, it cannot be denied that you have sent your lady *Polygamia* abroad in a *vesture of wrought gold*, but still I cannot
think

think she is *like the king's daughter all glorious within*, for remove the ornamented mantle which you have thrown over her, and her deformity appears to view.

The idea of protecting the weaker sex, and of saving multitudes of them from ruin, is what gives a bias in favor of your plan; as you have dressed it up, to the humane and serious reader. But the mischievous and horrible consequences which must inevitably attend the practice of it, you intirely keep out of sight, though it is plain enough that they frequently stared you in the face; and this makes you attempt to draw the line between what you call *the wild licentious Polygamy of the Mahometans*, and a *holy and sober use of it*. But in the first place, I am astonished that a man who is acquainted with the depths and depravity of human nature, which is the same in England as in Turkey, should imagine any such line can possibly be drawn, if Polygamy were established by law.—Secondly, the grand argument which you yourself bring in defence of Polygamy,

my,

my, in a manner counteracts and prevents any such *holy sober* use of it: for the case in which you principally aim to establish it is between a married man and a virgin or maid that is *enticed* by him. Now such a man from the very act he has been guilty of, not merely in lying with the woman, (for this you will not allow to be any sin at all if he mean to take her to dwell with him), but in *seducing* and *enticing* her, can have no such *holy sober* notions in his head, as you plead for; but as he first had an intercourse with her from a love of variety, so now he takes her as a punishment to which he is condemned by law, for having basely gratified his lust, though perhaps like Amnon with Tamar *his hatred of her is greater than the love wherewith he loved her*.

But whatever might be the reason why the all-wise God ever permitted polygamous marriages among the Jews, he has now under the gospel, as will yet more clearly appear, thought proper absolutely to prohibit them, and therefore to attempt their restoration under the notion of *any holy or sober use of them*, is

F to

to set up our own judgment against the infinite wisdom of God himself.

As to what you would urge from the example of Abraham, it is certain, that no man since his time could be in his particular situation, for to him was the promise made, *that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude*: And it is very observable, that the father of the faithful took unto him Hagar the Egyptian (who was a type of the Jewish church), at the particular instance of Sarai his wife, when both he and she supposed that *the Lord had restrained her from child-bearing*. A plain proof that he had more an eye to the fulfilment of God's promise, than to the gratification of his own lust; till therefore we find ourselves exactly in his predicament, we had better let his precedent for Polygamy entirely alone.

Were you to ask me how all the evils of fornication, uncleanness, seduction, and adultery might be cured? I would answer the question, by inquiring how you would
attempt

attempt to cure the depravity of fallen man? which can never be effected by adding the evil of Polygamy to those before mentioned, but by enforcing the divine law; but what law? not the judicial law of Moses, which you produce, but the holy spiritual law of God. Let the ministers of the gospel open and apply this law in its extent and purity, to the consciences of sinners, to shew them their transgression and their helplessness, and then let them freely preach Christ as the only remedy, both from the guilt and dominion of sin. This will be truly answering God's own purpose both in the temporal or typical punishments under the law, which are now abolished, and were then *only a shadow of things to come*; as also under the gospel, the rejectors of which *shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power*; whilst those who truly believe it, and embrace it *in the light and in the love of it*, shall receive *the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls*. This preaching of the moral law for the discovery and conviction of sin, and preaching

the gospel of the free grace of God as the only method of salvation *from* sin, will do more in *one year* for the cure of seduction, adultery, fornication, and lasciviousness in all its branches than a thousand treatises upon Polygamy, though they should have been *twenty years* in compiling.

STILL once more let us suppose your scheme established by the legislature just as you would have it. Very soon after, my dear friend to his own great grief, reads the following paragraph in the Morning Post.

“ Last night lady A——, wife of Sir
 “ Thomas A——, Bart. was found hang-
 “ ing in her own dressing-room, in ——
 “ Square. The cause of this dreadful ca-
 “ tastrophe is supposed to be as follows:
 “ About a week ago, Miss B——, daugh-
 “ ter of William B——, Esq; went off
 “ from the masquerade at Carlisle House,
 “ with Sir Thomas A——. Next day,
 “ her mother, Mrs. B——, hearing that
 “ she was at Sir Thomas’s house, came to
 “ her

“ her in the utmost distress, and interro-
“ gating her on the cause of her conduct,
“ she replied with great pertness, that nei-
“ ther she nor Sir Thomas had done any
“ thing they need be ashamed of, or that
“ was not authorized both by the law of
“ God and the law of the land. Sir Tho-
“ mas A—— was the *man of her choice* ;
“ she had *surrendered up her person* to him,
“ she was now his wife without any more
“ ceremony whatever, with him she meant
“ to continue *ad her day* ; and he might
“ take to himself twenty more young la-
“ dies in the same way, if he thought pro-
“ per ; she had no right to control him,
“ whilst the divine law, as well as the law
“ of the land, which had lately passed the
“ King, Lords, and Commons, in favour of
“ Polygamy, was now in full force.” — —
“ Heavens, child ! (cried the affrighted pa-
“ rent) do you know that Sir Thomas
“ A—— is already a married man, and
“ has a virtuous good wife of his own ;
“ and that what you have done will cer-
“ tainly break her heart ?—Know it, yes,
“ very well, but what is that to me ? (re-

“ plied Miss) Ought I to pretend to be
 “ wiser than God? or to wish to see hu-
 “ man inventions, superstitious ceremonies,
 “ and priest’s marriages adopted, instead of
 “ what he himself has appointed? No, no,
 “ I have now done with all these fooleries,
 “ since Sir Thomas A----- has put into my
 “ hands a very fine book with a very hard
 “ name, upon these subjects; and if every
 “ body was to do as Sir Thomas and I
 “ have done, seduction, fornication, and
 “ adultery, would soon be banished out of
 “ the kingdom; and to tell you the truth,
 “ as soon as I hear that the book is
 “ *abridged*, I intend to buy an hundred to
 “ disperse among the poor by way of cha-
 “ rity.” This answer of the young lady,
 had such an effect on the wretched mother,
 that she was carried home in a chair and
 expired the same evening; so that lady
 A—— and Mrs. B——, have both lost
 their lives by this unfortunate marriage.

Now I do not say that such a case ever
 will happen; but this I must say, that all
 this, and much more of a like sort might
 happen

happen if your plan were to pass into a law, for in the whole of this transaction, whatever motives might influence either the supposed characters of Sir Thomas A—— or Miss B——, neither the one nor the other have acted in the least tittle contrary to what your own book authorizes: and feigned (God be praised) as the case is, yet I thought the introduction of it very allowable, by way of contrasting some of these melancholy pictures, which you have drawn and hung out to public view on the other side. I may add, that it is repaying you in your own coin, for as you have ransacked old newspapers to point out the blessings of Polygamy *legitima*, it is very fair that I should have recourse to what we may naturally suppose will be the language of these papers, in order to point out the curses which will attend the monster when brought forth: and indeed, to shew the wisdom of that law which makes every Polygamist suffer death as a felon; but for which punishment you yourself have made the best apology, by wishing it were still to be put in execution upon the adulterer: therefore you
cannot

cannot blame those who looking upon Polygamy and adultery to be synonymous terms, have thought fit to inflict a sentence on the former, which you judge to be merited by the latter.

SUCH are a few of the flagrant mischiefs which must inevitably attend the introduction of Polygamy into this land, and yet they are but a few, in comparison of others which must strike the mind of every thinking person. For God's sake therefore, my dear friend, consider the dreadful licentious tendency of your assertions. Should one man defile another man's wife, you seem to lament that our laws do not punish him with death; but if he intice or debauch a thousand virgins, and afterwards take them to live with him, and call them by the name of wife, there is no harm done. It is a perfect marriage in the sight of God. There wants no human ceremony to complete it. The man is guilty of no sin. The woman, or rather each woman, is perfectly innocent; she has *surrendered up her person to the man of her choice*, and it would be

be the highest impropriety to *upbraid* her with the name of a *whore*.

If such reasoning be not (though I grant most undesirable) to give a sanction to fornication or adultery, I know not what is; and if I have or shall give the absolute undisturbance of Polygamy in the course of this work, you yourself must be of the same opinion; at present however, you are not of that mind, having given us a pretty strong proof of your sentiments on this point, in the case of a certain noble earl and the late unfortunate Miss R—y, whom you positively affirm, that the Rev. Mr. H—— ought to have looked upon as the earl's wife: and no doubt his lordship is much obliged to you for the healing plaister which you have administered to him: and he may now console himself with another Miss R—y, and another yet, if he thinks proper, without sin on his part, or cause of shame in that of the females.

Permit me now to state a case, and to ask your opinion on it.

As

As a magistrate, it may have frequently happened that a single woman has come before you to filiate her bastard child on a married man. Now I should be glad to know, what you would say to the parties on such an occasion? From your character as a minister of the gospel, we may reasonably suppose, that the man and the woman would expect you should not only enforce the statute *concerning bastards begotten and born out of lawful matrimony*, but that you should also add some seasonable advice and reproof concerning the sin they have been guilty of. But how great must be their surprize, if you were to address the two persons before you in the following language; and yet if you are true to your own principles, I see not what other you can make use of.

“ My friends, why are you uneasy? You
 “ have neither of you done any thing
 “ wrong in the sight of God, or that you
 “ need be ashamed of; so far from it, you
 “ have fulfilled the divine command, *in-*
 “ *crease and multiply*; and it is a scandal
 “ to our laws, that this poor girl should be
 “ deemed

“ deemed a whore. Besides, I pronounce
“ you to be useful members of the com-
“ munity, by the encouragement you have
“ given to population,

“ Go your ways therefore, take the wo-
“ man to live with you, and continue to
“ act together as you have done. You are
“ truly man and wife in the sight of God,
“ without going through the forms of that
“ superstitious ceremony which we call *ma-*
“ *trimony*; though we clergy are obliged to
“ trudge through the farce of reading, what
“ is called, the church service, before the
“ parties can be joined in law.”

As I hear a third volume of *Thelyphthora* is soon to make its appearance, your sentiments on the case in question, will no doubt oblige the public.

You would appear to disapprove the practice of *keeping mistresses*; but I beg to inquire where is the harm of this according to your system, if the man who keeps the woman be the first who had intercourse with
her?

So *The Blessings of Polygamy, &c.*

her? You say, in such case, *he may not put her away all his days.* It seems then the sin is in *putting her away*, not in *keeping her*; for he sins not at all whilst he cohabits with her; all that time she is *his wife*: yet if he puts her away, I hardly know whether you would denominate her his wife or his mistress, seeing it was only a *temporary intercourse* that he had with her; and indeed upon your plan, it is almost impossible to say, who is a kept mistress and who a wife; for you have adjudged the late unfortunate Miss *Ray*, to be the wife of the first Lord of the A———y; and you say that the Rev. Mr. H———n, ought to have been taught to have looked upon her as such.

When that amorous Prince, Charles the Second, lay on his death-bed, before the Jesuits laid hold on him, he was attended by the pious Bishop *Kenn*, when the exemplary prelate exhorted him to put away his mistress, the celebrated *Nell Gwynne* [Z],
and

[Z] I am not quite certain whether Eleanor Gwynne or the Duchess of Portsmouth, was at that time

and to be reconciled to his Queen. Had you, my good friend, been called to the dying Monarch, instead of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, what advice would you have administered for his soul's health on that particular occasion? The first piece of intelligence necessary to be obtained, would be whether any other man had been *one flesh* with the favorite actress, previous to his Majesty; in which case he was living in adultery with her, seeing she was the true wife in God's sight, of the first man who had been connected with her; but if his Majesty *only* had been familiar with her, then she was as much married to him by the divine law, as his own Queen was. How shall this difficulty be solved? Mrs. Gwynne alone can do it; and to her the reverend casuist must put the deciding question, and gather all the information he can relative to *the tokens of her virginity* before the King approached her. Mrs. Gwynne assures you, that no man whatever had ac-

time the reigning favorite of Charles the Second; but if I mistake not it was the former; however that be, it makes no difference as to the case in hand.

cess to her person before his Majesty; and that ever since she had been faithful to her royal lover. You answer (strictly according to the doctrine of *Thelyphthora*), “ Then, “ Madam, you are his Majesty’s *own* wife, “ and he is your *own proper* husband, according to the primitive institution of “ marriage, notwithstanding the ceremony “ which has passed between him and his “ present consort, and notwithstanding no “ such form by a priest has ever existed “ between you and him : therefore, if his “ Majesty should recover from this illness, “ he would shew himself a very wicked “ man in not living with you as he has “ done ; and you Mrs. Gwynne, would be “ equally sinful, if you did not continue to “ grant his Majesty every indulgence he “ requires at your hands. My advice therefore in this matter, for the present ease “ of the King’s conscience, and for his “ everlasting welfare, is this ; that if it “ please God to raise him up from this bed “ whereon he now languishes, you both “ continue to give yourselves up to the *holy* “ and *sober* embraces of each other, in
which

“ which may you *be fruitful and multiply* ;
“ and may thousands of others, influenced
“ by your virtuous examples, instead of
“ *pretending to be wiser than God* ; go on
“ to follow those bright examples, till for-
“ nication, adultery, and every species of
“ lewdness be banished from this guilty
“ land, which has forsaken the divine au-
“ thority, and substituted human devices
“ and superstitious ceremonies in its
“ stead.”

Is there a syllable in all this, which you as his Majesty's *spiritual guide* might not, nay *ought* not, upon your principles to have said upon the occasion ?

YOUR definition of a whore is confined to one “ who prostitutes herself to differ-
“ ent men as lust or gain may induce her,
“ *without design of marrying them.*” But I am quite at a loss to know what you mean by “ *marrying them* ;” do you suppose the woman to be unmarried, till some outward ceremony has passed ? Can the *magic* words of a priest make her more a wife or less a whore

whore than she was before? if so, you throw down at once the whole structure you have been raising. If you choose to abide by your own assertions, you must avow that she was married to the first man with whom she *became one flesh*; and therefore she must necessarily commit adultery with all others she becomes afterwards connected with: so that I may venture to affirm, that according to your ideas of marriage, fornication cannot exist. I grant however, that the above is a true definition of a *common strumpet*; but whoredom, if scripture be our guide, might be committed even under the Mosaic dispensation, when any unmarried woman or widow, had intercourse with only one man, who was not her lawful husband; as is clear from the case of Tamar; for we read *Gen. xxxviii. 24. It was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath played the harlot; and also behold she is with child by whoredom.* But according to your idea and definition of a whore, no man whatever had a right to say so. Suppose she had *surrendered up her person to the man of her choice*, whether she

she

she were virgin or widow, or whether he were married or unmarried, she had done nothing that was forbidden, and therefore ought not to be stigmatized with the disgraceful appellation of a whore. It is true indeed, Judah took her for a common harlot, and he went in unto her as such. But this alters not the case, for they who found *Judah* that she was with child by adultery, knew nothing of this intercourse, nor how it was obtained; and therefore the fact stands on record, as full proof that when any woman in Israel who had no husband proved to be with child, she was as much deemed an whore, as we should judge her to be one in England.

I must also observe, that neither *Judah* nor his friend *Hirah*, the Adullamite, seem to have thought it at all extraordinary, that they found an harlot sitting by the way side; nor did the men of whom *Hirah* inquired concerning her, express any astonishment at his question, as if some new thing had happened in Israel; but they simply made answer, that they did not see her; which circumstance,

G

cumtance,

cumstance, besides the frequent mention we have of harlots and adulteresses in the Old Testament, and the cautions given to avoid commerce with them, as also the complaints of the prophets, that the people *assembled themselves by troops in the harlots houses, and were like fed horses neighing after their neighbours wives*, carry pretty flagrant proof that adultery and whoredom were much more common in Judea, than you would have us believe, and that consequently Polygamy was no specific against either.

It has been urged, that if Polygamy be forbidden, some of the eminent Old Testament saints lived and died in adultery. It might with as much truth be objected, that if it be now unlawful for nearest relations to marry, the immediate descendants of Adam and of Noah lived and died in incest; or if it be now wrong for a man to marry his brother's wife, it must have been so in all ages of the world, and under all circumstances, since sin can never alter its nature.

It will readily be granted that sin cannot alter its nature, and that God cannot alter *his* nature as bearing an everlasting hatred against sin. But then what is sin, but the transgression of the law of God? And what is the law of God, but the transcript and declaration of the will of God? And if God permit that at one time which he prohibits at another, the same act will be no sin when he allows it, which will be sin when he forbids it.—When Jael wife of Heber the Kenite, slew Sisera, the captain of Jabin's host, by driving a nail into his temples whilst he was asleep in her tent, she committed no sin, because she acted under the immediate direction of God; but had Jael done this without that direction, she had been guilty of the basest treachery and murder. Had Joshua when he conducted the Israelites to the promised land, acted by his own authority in burning the cities, slaying the inhabitants young and old, and even hanging five kings at once, after making his captains put their feet upon the necks of those kings, he would have been one of the most impious and arbitrary tyrants that the

sun ever beheld; but by acting by the express warrant of Jehovah, in driving out and consuming the idolatrous nations, he had power to command that sun to stand still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, whilst he completed his slaughter on the combined armies of all the kings of the Amorites, *Joshua x. throughout.*

But after all, suppose I cannot reconcile this difficulty to my own apprehension: suppose I am fearful of saying that Polygamy was no sin under the Old Testament, and am also fearful of asserting that Abraham, David, and others, lived and died in adultery; still why cannot I content myself with what is plainly revealed, and leave it to God to clear up the justice and equity of his own dealings with the children of men? Secret things belong unto him. Infinite wisdom has its own reasons for whatever it does, and will be accountable to none. Whatever be dark, this is certain, that God thought fit to *permit* Polygamy under the law: but permission does not by any means

means imply approbation; nay, God often permits that which from the very holiness of his nature is his abhorrence. On the other hand, it is equally certain, that God has thought fit to prohibit Polygamy under the gospel; and therefore though permission may well enough accord with disapprobation, yet prohibition and approbation are so far from agreeing, that they cannot stand together.

LET us now in as few words as possible, consider all the proof you attempt to bring from the Old Testament in favour of Polygamy, and the whole amounts to this: That in *no case* it was commanded or enjoined; in some cases it was permitted; but whether this permission ever amounted to approbation, remains still to be ascertained. It is true, you have brought some texts of scripture in defence of what you have advanced; but in none of these you have attempted to prove any thing beyond an allowance of Polygamy, except in one, and that is *Exod. xxii. 16.* *If a man take a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her,*

he shall surely endow her to be his wife. And even this single text will not bear you out, unless you can bring some better proof than you have done, that *a man* (which you have unwarrantably ventured to render *any man*) means a married man, at least a married man, as well as a single one; in which interpretation however, you have not only the general voice of commentators against you, but if scripture be allowed to be its own interpreter, the voice of God himself, in that remarkable text which you have bestowed much pains to get over, *Lev. xviii. 18. Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time;* which those who have the most critical knowledge of the Hebrew, interpret as in the marginal reading, of not taking one wife to another, for which they have certainly very good authority, since the word which we translate a *sister*, is rendered *another*, in other parts of scripture.

The utmost therefore, which you have proved from the Old Testament, is a *per-*
mission

The Blessings of Polygamy, &c. 11

mision of Polygamy among the Jews, not without much difficulty in getting over several texts, which at least seem very unfavorable to it, particularly that noted passage, *Mal. ii. 14, 15, 16.* which I shall give at length. *Yet ye say, Wherefore? because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth; against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet he is thy companion, and the wife of thy youth. And didst thou not make one? yet has he one spirit of the Spirit: and therefore will he not be angry with a godly seed. Yet will he take in due portion his wife of thy youth. For the Lord, God of Israel saith, that he would parting away, &c. &c.* Though it is certainly a humiliating circumstance for an author to confess himself ignorant of a language, the knowledge of which is in a degree necessary for the carrying on of a controversy in which he is engaged, yet rather than strut about like *Æsop's* daw in borrowed plumes, I will freely and ingenuously own myself incapable of examining into your Hebrew commentaries on the foregoing text, which I am

the

the more sorry for, as from the awkward or rather round-about explanation you have given of the passage; I am led to suspect that you have not faithfully delivered the mind and will of God revealed in it, particularly in those words, *Did not he make one?* i. e. as I always understood by comparing it with the context, “Did not he make the husband and wife one, by uniting them in so near a relation, that they two should be considered as one flesh?”—But what is your sense of the words—*Did not one make? Or did not one God make or create both you and your wives?* Vol. I. p. 139. But whether you, or whether all “*the commentators that have followed one another like sheep,*” be in the right in the explanation of this clause, it is certain that if the whole three verses taken together, do not contain any absolute command that one man should have only one wife, it seems at least taken for granted, since there is mention made only of one man and one woman as united together in the nuptial bonds—and stiled, *thee and the wife of thy youth*, against whom the husband is cautioned *not to deal treacherously.*

Be assured, that I am as much against pinning my faith on the sleeves of commentators, as you can be; but yet I cannot help thinking, that there are many among them, who for learning, extensive knowledge, sound judgment, integrity and humility, are not at all inferior to those who affect to undervalue them. I am also persuaded, that though the knowledge of the original scriptures be very useful, yet that no point of real importance either to the faith or practice of a Christian depends upon, or requires a great skill in criticism. The gospel is preached to the poor, and the Lord knew, that comparatively few of his people would be deeply versed in languages.

I further beg leave just to observe, that though you profess most strongly to decry all human authority in general, because the current of it is against you, yet you are happy to make the most of every scrap and shred of it, when it is at all in your favor: I allow, that there is great danger in setting too high a value on any human authority
whatever;

whatever; yet human authority where it keeps its proper place of subordination, is not without much use even in the investigation of divine truth: therefore where faithful ecclesiastical historians, fathers, and commentators, above all where the noble army of martyrs, and the holy church universal throughout the world, are and have been agreed in any point of doctrine from the first establishment of Christianity; though I am far from saying their testimony is infallible, yet I must say it is not to be lightly regarded, especially ought no one man without much fear, diffidence, and caution to set up his own judgment against so great a cloud of witnesses. We generally find that error and high self-confidence go hand in hand, whilst modesty and humility are the inseparable companions of truth. *The meek will be guide in judgment; the meek will be teach his way.* Psal. xxv. 9. When Thuedas arose, he *boasted himself to be somebody* [A], but Paul stiled himself

[A] *Acts* v. 36.

the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints.

After all, you will have no occasion to blame me for making too much use of human authority, as throughout this piece, I do not recollect that I have made one quotation, but what comes directly from the fountain of truth, *the word of God.*

But how have you succeeded when you come to the New Testament? All here is negative proof indeed; for with all your partiality to Polygamy, I bear you witness, that you have not even made the attempt of pressing a single text into your service. All you have done, all you could do, all you have endeavored to do, is to shew that the New Testament writings, allowing you your own interpretation of them, *may be so explained*, as not to forbid Polygamy; but not so much as one text is offered to prove even the permission of it.—Your grand argument is brought up again, again, again, and again, that if God allowed Polygamy under the Old Testament, it cannot be sinful

sinful under the New ; and proceeding upon this most erroneous hypothesis, you bend and strain every scripture which stands in your way, till you have silenced them from speaking what they really do speak, and have made them speak just what you would have them speak. But whilst such bold liberties as these are taken with the blessed word of God, can we wonder that the doctrine of transubstantiation, or any other popish absurdities are swallowed down? Nay, are we to be astonished at the folly and enthusiasm of one in this kingdom, who some years since (you remember well the fact) declared he should never die, but should be translated as were Enoch and Elijah. Had any one reasoned with him on his delusion, might he not have said, “ I
 “ see that two of the Old Testament saints
 “ were translated, therefore translation was
 “ then agreeable to the mind of God, the
 “ scriptures of the New Testament are in-
 “ tirely silent on this head ; they leave the
 “ matter just as they found it, therefore,
 “ why may not I expect translation as well

“ as Enoch and Elijah ? ”—Indeed I think not only translation, but navigation, fortification, or any other *reason*, might as readily be proved from the New Testament as Polygamy; besides, that to prove a doctrine from the New Testament, which you yourself allow is not once mentioned in it, is I apprehend rather an odd manner of proving.

HAVING now, I hope, in some measure cleared the way before me, by removing many false ideas and misconceptions, by which you strongly incline your readers in favor of your system, and indeed in a manner try to frighten them into a persuasion that the whole Christian world has hitherto been in darkness, both in principle and practice, on the subject in question, and that every interpreter of God's word who preceded you, has only been ringing poor Whittington's bells in their ears, to prevent their hearing distinctly, what God speaks to them in his own written word; I shall now endeavor by the help of God, to consider

sider as briefly as possible, the plain obvious meaning of some texts of scripture in the New Testament, by which you attempt to support your cause, though I believe you will not deny but you have met with hard work before you took your leave of them.

THE first text I mention is that, *Matt. v. 28. I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

Without the least proof as I can see in your favor, you insist upon it, that the word *woman* here must mean a married woman. But why so? Is there nothing improper in a man, whether married or single, lusting after any single woman or widow? None at all upon your system, if he means to make them his wives. But certainly you will not deny that the Greek word *γυνή mulier*, means any *woman* in general, married or unmarried, as much as the word *ανρ, vir* means any man in general; and therefore to confine it to a married woman is to
make

make a limitation to serve a purpose, where God himself has made none [B].

Still further does this perversion of scripture appear, in your comment on that important text, ver. 32. of the same chapter. *I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.*

What labor and pains have you bestowed, to convince your readers that the word *another*, means another man's wife, who

[B] My dear friend in his elucidation of this text, in order to evade its force, observes, that if by a woman *here* be meant *any woman*, then a man may commit adultery by looking at his own wife. At first I really felt myself hurt at the thought, that one for whom I have so high a regard, should descend to such low chicanery, but I presently recollected, *that he had been bred to the bar*, and therefore passed it by with a smile.

But the manner in which he speaks of *spiritual expressions* in the same place, instead of a *shake*, occasioned a *shake of the head*.

has been divorced from her husband, though the word is as general as constant usage can make it, and means any other woman, whether maid, widow, or wife. But then this plain reading of the text, for it requires no elucidation, would at once overthrow the doctrine of Polygamy; and cut up by the roots your new definition of adultery, by proving that a married man *may* commit adultery with a single woman. You are rather aware indeed of the tautology which you put into our Saviour's mouth, by your interpretation of this text, but still you try to get over it at all events. Let us render it as you would have it. *I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another [that is say you, the wife of another man] committeth adultery, and whoso marrieth her which is put away, [who must still be the wife of another man] committeth adultery.* Such is the tautology, not to say nonsense, which you make to proceed out of the mouth of him *who spake as never man spake*; whereas, take the words in their plain easy signification, and he that
 runneth

runneth may read, and come to the true sense of them. The passage is mentioned by three evangelists, and twice by St. Matthew; only in St. Mark it stands double, and the crime is recorded as reciprocal on each side. *Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.* Now I would observe, that the word *another* in the latter verse, is the very same in the original, when it relates to the man, as the word *another* is in the former verse, when it relates to the woman, where you say, it must agree with the antecedent substantive *γυναίκα*, *wife*, only differing in gender; so that if we admit your construction in the one case, we ought to do it in the other, and make the word *αλλο* agree with its antecedent substantive *ανδρα* *husband*, and then the whole passage will run thus. “Whosoever shall put away
“ his wife, and marry *another man's wife*
“ committeth adultery against her; and if
“ a woman shall put away her husband,
“ and marry *another woman's husband*, she
H “ committeth

“ committeth adultery.” The conclusion of which interpretation is this, that if any man put away his wife (except for fornication) and marry another single woman or widow, he commits no adultery; and if a woman put away her husband, and marry another single man or a widower, she commits no adultery.—Alas! what will not evasion fly to!

The liberty you take in changing the word *αλλην* for *αλλοθριαν* must not pass unnoticed. I have consulted all the three evangelists where the passage is recorded, and no such word is to be found: St. Matthew and St. Mark both have *αλλην*, and St. Luke alone uses the word *ετεραν* which is nearly the same as *αλλην* *another, any other woman*; but the word *αλλοθριαν* which you have introduced, means *belonging to another*; or when joined to *γυναικα* *the wife of another man*. Now can we suppose, that if our Lord wished to have his own meaning understood in this most important matter, he would have used an expression which was very liable to be mistaken, and have left it

to you or me to make an amendment in his language, by leaving out one word, and substituting another? but instead of speaking ambiguously, he has vouchsafed to give us one of the plainest expressions imaginable, and which in its easy literal sense is capable of no other construction than that which our translators have given us. Nor does your *facetious gentleman's* story of the *glass* and *leathern bottles*, at all make in your favor, but quite point blank against you, though I allow that a joke may sometimes tickle the fancy of the tired reader, and cause him to mistake witticism for argument. And here I may observe, that when you were entertaining us with the story of Harlequin getting into a quart bottle, (vol. II. p. 352.) you might have added, that he also jumped down his own throat, which was not only *advertised* at the same time with the quart bottle business about thirty years ago, but I myself saw it attempted at one of the theatres; though I must own with not much better success than a friend of mine attempts to prove, *that any woman*

whatever, means another man's divorced wife.

My friend would illustrate this by that text, 1 Cor. x. 19. ὑπο αλλης συνειδησεως which is translated *another man's conscience*; but the words are strictly *another conscience*, and the addition of *man's* is inserted by way of expletive, and because another conscience and another man's conscience are synonymous terms, seeing no man can have more than one conscience.—But this is no argument at all, why another woman must mean *another man's divorced wife*, unless you can prove that every woman living stands in that predicament.

But to return, You will say, that our Lord in this passage is not speaking of Polygamy, but only of divorce. True, the question put by the Pharisees, proves that he is speaking of divorce; but in so doing, he is naturally led to shew what that crime is, for which divorce is lawful, and this is adultery; which if there be any meaning
in

in words, he tells us may be committed when any married man takes to himself any other woman besides his own wife, be that other woman as before observed, a virgin, a widow, or a wife. And if we consult the context, we shall perceive that in the reasoning which our Lord makes use of, in order to satisfy the inquiry of the Pharisees concerning divorce, he refers them to the original institution of marriage. *Have ye not read* (saith he, *that from the beginning, made them male and female, and said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.* As if he had said, “ Know ye not that when God created Adam and Eve, he made the one male and the other female, and ordained that they should be faithful to each other, and keep the marriage bed inviolable: from thenceforth therefore, the husband and the wife are no longer to be esteemed as separate persons, but though twain or two

“ in number, are one flesh in the sight of
 “ God ; upon which account, a man must
 “ leave his father and his mother, and must
 “ cleave unto his wife, not only in body,
 “ but in heart and affection. Therefore
 “ ye Pharisees do greatly err, when you
 “ suppose that it is lawful for a man to
 “ put away his wife for every or for any
 “ cause ; for though for the hardness of
 “ your hearts this practice was suffered by
 “ the law of Moses, yet from the begin-
 “ ning, when God first instituted the bond
 “ of marriage, it was otherwise, for he
 “ then made only one man for one woman,
 “ and one woman for one man, wherefore
 “ I now tell you, that whosoever putteth
 “ away one wife, and marrieth another
 “ woman in her stead, committeth adul-
 “ tery, and whoso marrieth her that is put
 “ away committeth adultery.”

Certainly, no one can say, that this is
 any forced comment upon our Lord's
 words on this very important passage, but
 a plain easy paraphrase upon the text, which
 so far from countenancing, directly mili-
 tates

tates against Polygamy, and actually condemns it as adultery.

After much pains indeed, to state a distinction between the husband and wife being *legally* two, and *numerically* two, you seem to wonder at what you call the legerdemain of those, who suppose that the husband and wife mean only two persons, or *two and no more*. But surely, the art of legerdemain is much more to be admired in him, who can change *two* they two, into they three or they four, just as he pleases, and who by the same art can reduce Solomon and his seven hundred wives into *one* they *twain*.

The apostle Paul alludes to that scriptural text, *Gen. ii. 24.* in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, ch. v. 31. where he is treating of the love and union which ought to subsist between the husband and the wife. *For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.* And then he adds, *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*—Nothing

thing can be clearer, nothing more restrictive of one man to one woman, and one woman to one man, than these words of the apostle.—But my friend would draw a conclusion in his favor from this text, by observing, that the church or spouse of Christ, being made up of many members, and having only one husband, therefore the analogy between Christ and his church is much better supported by the Polygamist than by the Monogamist.—But he should recollect, that though the believers which constitute the spouse of Christ, are indeed *many* when considered *individually*, yet when considered *collectively*, in which light the scripture always does consider them, they are still only ONE BODY; unless therefore, my friend can prove, (what the amorous Polygamist would not wish him to prove) that a man may have three or four wives, and these wives have but *one body* among them, the argument on which he hangs his conclusion, is no better than a rotten rope, which being pulled too tight, snaps in the middle, and down drops Polygamy.

I intended in this place to have introduced a comment or paraphrase upon the whole seventh chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, but considering how much I had already said on that chapter a few pages back, let me only intreat the reader "to lay down my book and take
" up a better," and let him turn to that chapter as it came in perfect purity out of God's own hand, unmix'd by paraphrase, or unadulterated with human comments; and when he has read the whole of it throughout, let him cease to wonder if he can, that there ever existed a man of sense, learning, and piety, who could believe that chapter, and yet maintain Polygamy.

Suffer me however, just to ask a few questions on these words, *Doth shall ye not one the other except it be with consent for a time.*

1. Can more than two persons possibly be included in these words, "one the other?"

2dly,

2dly, Is not the consent of the wife as much included as the consent of the husband, in the apostle's injunction?

3dly, Does not a husband more effectually defraud a wife of the rights of the marriage bed, by taking another woman, than by continence? In the former case he defrauds her *positively*; in the latter only *negatively*.

4thly, Was there ever an affectionate wife in the world that would give her free *consent* to be so defrauded?

Now remember my request, and read the chapter throughout with reverence and attention.

THERE is yet one text of scripture, which as you seem to lay much stress upon, I shall beg particularly to consider. The words are found, *Tit. i. 6.* *If any (i. e. if any elder) be the husband of one wife.* From hence you conclude, that as by the apostle's direction the elders were to be chosen out of those who were husbands of one wife, therefore there must certainly be among the

the

the Christian laity many who had more wives than one. But we may just as well infer, that because the elder women were to be selected out of those who had each of them been the wife of one man, (1 *Tim.* v. 9.) therefore there were many other Christian women who had more husbands than one. The words directly answer to one another in both places. *The husband of one wife, or of one woman*; and the wife of one husband, or of one man, and the purposes for which they were chosen, were in many cases the same [C]; so that as you interpret the one text with regard to the woman, who was to be chosen as a deaconess from among the widows, that she must be one who had only been once married; so you must also interpret the other text which relates to the man, (whether priest or deacon) that he must be chosen out of such as had only been once married.—But you say that text, 1 *Tim.* v. 9. which relates to the widow, is in the past tense, *having been* the wife of one man,

[C] More particularly where the man was chosen to the office of a deacon. See 1 *Tim.* iii. 12.

whereas

whereas the text *Tit. i. 6.* is in the present tense, *if any be the husband of one wife.* I answer, that if this had not been the case, the woman would not have been a widow, but a wife, whereas the choice was to be made, of such an one as *had been*, not of such as *then was*, the wife of one man, because a married woman being in subjection to the law of her husband, and at his disposal, could not so properly attend to the affairs of the church, where she was to be employed in performing different offices of relief and kindness to the sick and distressed members of it, as a widow could: whereas the objection did not lie so strongly on the man's side, whose province it is not to take upon him the care of household matters: But still the difference of tense, makes no difference of sense, in the point before us, and therefore, what the passage means in the one place it means in the other, viz. that both the man and the woman should only have been once married, that they might attend to the affairs of the church with less distraction, by not being burdened with family encumbrances.—And here, I must

must further observe, that in paraphrasing on these texts, you have made some concessions which are not very friendly to the doctrine you espouse, I mean that of Polygamy; (for it evidently appears by the chain and connection of both your volumes, that this is the great Diana which you would set up, and for the sake of which the whole was written) for you grant that the man to be chosen to be a bishop or presbyter, ought not to have two wives at a time. But why not? can that be wrong under the gospel, which was right under the law? Is Paul come to contradict Moses? Elkanah the priest, notwithstanding he had all the duties of his office to attend to, had two wives at a time, and why may not any Christian priest or presbyter have the same? Thus ought you to reason, if you would be consistent with yourself, else you immediately destroy the building which you have all along been attempting to set up, “That whatsoever God allowed under the Old Testament dispensation, he cannot disallow under the New.” Your argument therefore, once more proves too much, and lays you
at the

under the necessity either of allowing Polygamy on the woman's side, or of disallowing it on the man's: or otherwise, you are constrained to grant, that God for wise reasons has thought fit to forbid a plurality of wives to his ministers under the gospel, though he permitted it under the law. If you still urge that this prohibition was more especially confined to the distressed or infant state of the church, I will not dispute the point with you; but this is a further argument in my favor, and verifies my assertion, "That God as sovereign of his
 " creatures, has full right to disallow and
 " forbid at one period, what he allows and
 " even commands at another, according as
 " he sees fit that times and circumstances
 " should alter; and that still God changeth
 " not, neither in his own nature, nor in
 " his will, since the one great end he has
 " in view is his own glory, and the good
 " of his church and people."

HAVING endeavored to restore several texts of scripture to their original meaning, which appeared to me to be manifestly distorted

torted by your explanation of them in favor of Polygamy, I proceed to make a few short observations on what you have said more particularly relative to marriage.

MOST justly you condemn the church of Rome for her unscriptural injunctions of celibacy, as well as some of the primitive fathers, for their unauthorized declamation against second marriages: but it is easy to conceive, that these errors might be adopted, by extending those passages of scripture to after-periods of the church, which were only designed for the primitive and distressed ages of it, which will therefore admit of some excuse, though not for the church of Rome, yet for the earliest fathers who lived in those ages, for what they have advanced in those points; and certainly our Lord and his apostles, more especially St. Paul in the seventh chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, do under particular circumstances, and where the case of the parties will admit of it, give the preference to a single life, and encourage widows and widowers not to embark again in the married state,

state, without they find themselves under the necessity of so doing.—Some humble apology therefore may be made, though not for Rome herself, yet for the primitive fathers who have written such extravagant encomiums of virginity, by reflecting, that they lived in those very times for which all those texts which speak in favor of it were intended; but although in after-ages *superstition* so far kept the throne, that she attributed I know not what merit to an unnatural celibacy, and even ordained sanguinary laws for the punishment of priests who should marry, in direct defiance of God's great command, *increase and multiply*; still this proves nothing but that superstition is, and always will be superstition, but it adds not the weight of a grain to your arguments in favor of Polygamy: on the contrary, I should not wonder, if it were to be urged against you, perhaps many years hence, “That amidst the various cor-
 “ rptions and superstitions which from
 “ time to time infested the Christian church,
 “ relative to divorce, marriage, celibacy,
 “ &c.

“ &c. at last in the eighteenth century.
“ flourished one *Martin M. d. d.*, a person of
“ great learning, judgment, and piety, who
“ being determined to run as far as he could
“ from the Romish church in these points,
“ leaped into the other extreme, and actu-
“ ally wrote two volumes in defence of Poly-
“ gamy.” But I hope the ecclesiastical
writer will immediately add, that “ being
“ convinced of his error, he recanted it
“ with true Christian candour and contrition
“ of heart.”

Whilst I am on this subject, I cannot help observing how repeatedly you have brought up that statute of Henry VIII. which enacted, that no priest should marry on pain of death. And what is the conclusion you wish to draw from it? Why, that from the unscriptural absurdity of that statute, a direct contrary one ought to be enacted, and that because no priest might then be permitted to marry or wife, now any layman at least, should have the liberty of marrying two or more; which is just as

good reasoning, as if I were to say, that if that parliament had been absurd enough to pass a law that every priest should have his nose cut off, therefore another act ought now to pass, for any layman to have two or more noses [D]. Or because the French capuchin friar you mention told you, it was contrary to the rules of his order ever to wear a pair of shoes at all; therefore it was now proper and expedient for a man to wear two or three pair at once.

But leaving the fooleries and extravagancies of popery to those who choose to be

[D] So far is the credulity of popery from supposing that a priest may not well enough exist without a nose, that it can even believe a priest may live without a head.—Whoever has visited the convent of St. Dennis near Paris, has seen the image of that Saint in silver with his head in his own hands; and has been told with a very grave face, by the ecclesiastic who shews the treasures of the church, that St. Dennis (from whom the convent takes its name) having suffered decapitation for the sake of religion, afterwards took up his head in his hands, and carried it from Paris to the place where the monastery now stands, which if I remember right, is a distance of about six miles.

amused

amused with them, I pass on to a circumstance which you mention, vol. I. 212. 213; concerning some of our principal reformers, at the head of whom you have deservedly placed that great champion of the Protestant faith, Martin Luther. I mean, “their
“ unanimous agreement at *Wittenberg*, that
“ it was not contrary to the divine law,
“ for a man to have two wives at once.”
On which authority you inform us, that *Philip, Landgrave of Hesse*, actually married a second wife, his first being alive.

The case of the *Landgrave of Hesse* was a very particular one, and is taken from an authority which you do not much chuse to avow. If I judge right you have gathered it from *Polygamy Triumphant*, p. 534. A performance which I perceive has been of signal use to you. The fact was, that the wife of the *Landgrave* found herself for special reasons incapable of cohabiting with her own husband, and he found himself under a scriptural necessity of avoiding celibacy. To defend to the utmost of this

matter, would lead me into a dissertation which I am sure the delicate reader would wish me to avoid: suffice it say in general, that they could not live together as man and wife. The case was referred to the consideration of the protestant divines, among whom were *Luther, Melancton, and Bucer,* who after great deliberation and caution and not without much diffidence, delivered their opinion, that under such circumstances, the Landgrave might be permitted to take another wife.

But though I have examined various parts of that laborious treatise (*Pol. Tri.*) I cannot any where discover the quotation you have brought and marked with inverted commas, as put by way of a question, to the aforesaid divines at Wittemberg, “Whether for a
 “ man to have two wives at once was con-
 “ trary to the divine law?” Nor do I see any thing of their *unanimous* answer, “That
 “ it was not;” therefore I hope if you publish another edition of *Thelyphtora*, you will tell us from what source you have de-
 rived

rived your authority for this proposition to the divines, and their *unanimous* reply to it.

But surely Luther instead of being that firm inflexible and steady character he was ever esteemed to be, must have been the most pusillanimous, wavering, and inconstant of all mortals, if he had delivered the opinion you charge him with, if the circumstances of the case had not been very particular: for looking over *M. de S. J. J.*'s history of the Reformation in Germany, in order to see if any thing was mentioned there concerning the case you allude to of *Philip, Landgrave of Hesse*, though I met with nothing at all on that head throughout the whole book, yet I find the following remarkable passages from a work of Luther's (which had the full approbation of Melancthon, Bucer, and the other protestant divines) relative to the *Indubitables* of that time which will clearly shew what was the opinion of those great reformers on the matter of Polygamy.

“ The evil Spirit who endeavors to de-
 “ stroy the Christian religion, does not
 “ usually make choice of Polygamy for the
 “ compassing his designs, he knows the in-
 “ famy and wickedness of such a practice
 “ is so notorious that all men abhor it.”

Again. “ To marry as many wives as
 “ his lewdness has a mind to, can be the
 “ contrivance of none but some raw un-
 “ practiced devil.”

Now from these extracts which I have transcribed *verbatim*, can any man in the world suppose, that *Luther*, *Melancton*, and *Bucer*, at the very same period that they were condemning Polygamy in such severe terms among the *Anabaptists*, were abetting and encouraging it in the *Landgrave of Hesse*? The thought is so absurd and extravagant, that it cannot be harbored for a moment: I would therefore humbly propose an amendment in your words, “ this
 “ proves what they thought” [viz. what *Luther*, *Bucer*, and *Melancton* thought on
 the

the matter of Polygamy! “but by no means that they thought *right*,” and would insert in their stead, “This proves what I would have them think, but by no means what they did think.”

The above-named learned, pious, and faithful historian *John Selden* giving an account of that pestilent sect called Anabaptists, (which was totally different from those we now call Baptists) tells us, that “they introduced Polygamy,” that *Jacob of Leyden* their chief leader or king, commanded his twelve teachers to declare “that a man was not obliged to confine himself to one wife, but might marry as many as he pleased;” that therefore “they harangued upon matrimony from their pulpits for three days together, soon after which, he (*Jacob of Leyden*) married no less than three wives.”— That most of their party had no less than five wives a man. That this impious wretch who was their principal prophet, made one

“ of his wives kneel down and beheaded her
 “ with his own hands in the market place.”

How am I grieved to find my worthy friend in such company! but indeed I can see no difference between his doctrine and theirs in the point of Polygamy, only that these people did not go such lengths as to take their wives before they were married to them by an external ceremony, whereas he explodes every thing of this sort as superstitious priestcraft.

We differ very little if at all, in our sentiments on the marriage act. I have long considered it not only as most inimical to the interests of the nation, but as standing in direct opposition to those great commands of God himself, *Be fruitful and multiply. Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*

Whether or no the mere intercourse of a man with a virgin constitute a marriage in the sight of God, I will not dispute with
 you.

you. Certainly, the man in such case, ought by the law of God, to make her his wife, as I have elsewhere observed: yet, I think it both a dangerous and an unscriptural position to say, that she really is his wife, independent of any law or ceremony whatever: which law or ceremony, however it may vary, according to times, circumstances, and the custom of different nations, is that solemn act of recognition which binds the parties together, making them one in a legal or political sense, and distinguishing their intercourse from that of brute beasts.

When God created our first parents in Paradise, he did not leave the man to take the woman to be his wife; but it is said, "*God brought the woman to the man.*" It is true, this act, form, or ceremony, call it which you will, was immediately between God and the parties, but still as our first parents alone were then created, it was the only one that *could* exist, and therefore your remark, that there was no *priest* on the occasion

caſion was totally needleſs. To this form or ceremony however, moſt civilized and indeed even uncivilized nations ſeem to have had reſpect in their marriages from that time; and particularly our own church, by appointing a perſon who is uſually called *the father*, (whether he be really ſo or not) to give the woman to the man, and I apprehend it is in alluſion to this original form and inſtitution, that the author of the *two ſermons* ſo much quoted (and ſo much diſapproved) by you, ſays, that the prieſt or miniſter now *acts in God's ſtead*, by receiving the woman from the father's hand, and delivering her to her intended huſband: And I remember to have once ſeen a Jew's wedding at *Amſterdam*, where beſides ſeveral other ceremonies, ſomething of the ſame form was obſerved.

Here I muſt beg leave to ſtate another caſe for your ſolution.

Suppoſe a woman to have been ſeduced by any man, whether married or ſingle; or
suppoſe

suppose she freely consents to give herself up for a time to any man; let us go further still, and suppose she were even a common prostitute: afterwards she is truly sorry and penitent for what she has done. Now ought such a woman to marry, (though I can hardly yet tell what you mean by the word) or must she for ever live unmarried? —If you say she may lawfully marry, then what becomes of your own definition of marriage, seeing by that definition she was in the sight of God, the true wife of the first man who was connected with her, and consequently if she have commerce with any other she is an adulteress, and the man with whom she has that commerce is an adulterer. If you say she may *not* marry any other man than him who was first connected with her, then in all probability you condemn the poor creature to all the temptations of a single life. So that in the one case lewdness and adultery, in the other celibacy and depopulation must be the effect of your system.

But

But I avoid any further disputation on this point, especially as you perfectly agree with me on the propriety and expediency of some outward recognition of marriage before the world, for the purposes of civil society; and as I heartily acquiesce with you, that whether this be done by an ecclesiastic, or by a justice of the peace, as it was in the last century, is of no essential importance.

Before I dismiss this subject, I cannot help taking notice, that under your chapter of marriage, you bring your favorite text to shew that nothing can be added to or diminished from a marriage in the sight of God, when there has been an act of union in the parties; which text however rather contradicts than confirms your assertion. The words are these: *If a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of vir-*
gins

gins [E]. But if she were really his wife before in the sight of God, by the act which had passed between them, it was not in the father's power to set up his own against the divine authority. So that either she was not his wife, or else the institution of God gave place to the will of the father.—This seems a clear proof that something else besides the mere knowledge of a woman's person was necessary to constitute a marriage under the Jewish law; not to mention that the words *he shall endow her to be his wife*, plainly intimate that she was *not* his wife till such endowment, notwithstanding the intercourse he had had with her.

The like may be said in the case of the woman of Samaria, who *had had five husbands*, and when our Lord held his conference with her, was living with one who *was not her husband*. But why not her husband, if the five first were dead, and the present one had taken possession of her per-

[E] *Exod.* xxii. 16. 17

son? Upon your plan, nothing else was necessary to make them man and wife: You therefore very unfairly, because without the least authority, suppose that one of the five first was then living.

Since I wrote the above, I have looked a second time into the Monthly Review for October 1780, and must acknowledge that what the Reviewers have said concerning our Lord's conference with the woman of Samaria, is so much more to the purpose, and so much better expressed than in my own words, that I beg to refer the reader to their remarks.

In the Review for the next month, is also a very satisfactory solution of the text, *Deut. xxi. 15. If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the first born son be her's that was hated: Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that*
he

he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated, which is indeed the first-born: but he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the first-born, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath, &c.

As our present translation of this passage coincides with Mr. Madan's opinion, he is happy to admit it; had it been otherwise, he would have sheltered himself under the wing of his favorite commentator *Montanus*, who renders the words, *cum fuerit viri due uxores*. *If there shall have been to a man two wives; or if a man SHALL HAVE HAD two wives*; by which version there is no proof at all that he had the two wives both at once. Nay, these words, her's that was hated (not that *is* hated) being in the past tense imply the contrary. But admitting that he had, still the text carries not with it the least glimpse of an approbation of Polygamy on God's part, but is merely directory of what shall be done with the children by each wife.—It is said,
Exod.

Exod. xxii. 2, 3. If a man shall steal an ox or a sheep and kill it or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. But we have just the same reason to say, that God approves of *sheep-stealing*, as that he approves of Polygamy, because in both cases he gives directions what shall be done: in the one case, the thief was to make restitution; in the other, the Bigamist was not to add one evil to another, by disinheriting the eldest son of the hated wife, and giving his substance to the son of the favorite wife.

I cannot take my leave of what the Reviewers have said on *Thelyphthora*, without remarking, that I think those gentlemen have born rather too hard on Mr. Madan, in supposing that he was guilty of any want of reverence either intended or not intended, *towards Christ or towards the sacred scriptures*, because he says, “ that if it
 “ could be proved that in any one instance,
 “ Christ added to or diminished from the
 “ law of God, by ordaining any thing con-
 trary

trary to or inconsistent with it, it would be making him a greater impostor than Mahomet." I doubt not, but Mr. Madan so far from thinking that that such an expression might excite "*emotions of indignation or disgust,*" meant by this forcible language against the idea of setting Christ and the divine law at variance to show his own high veneration for both.—And indeed when we consider that the apostle John testifying his zeal against infidelity, says, *he that believeth not Christ, he maketh him a liar,* I think Mr. Madan's mode of speech is very justifiable on scripture authority. Upon which account I should hope that the Reviewers, if they think there is any argument in what I advance, would candidly retract what they have said of my mistaken, but still worthy friend, (against whom they certainly have sufficient advantage in other points) for having uttered, what at the first perusal they judged to be *shocking and indecent, and tending to wound the ear of the modest and humble Christian.* But if they should still retain their opinion,

K

I hope

I hope they will pardon me for the liberty I have taken in endeavoring to vindicate one for whom I profess a sincere regard, so far as I believe his intention to have been good, and his words capable of a favorable construction.

Still another observation occurs to me on the text, *Exod.* xxii. 16, 17. which being nearly the same with that, *Deut.* xxii. 28, 29. I shall just mention what I have to say on them both together in this place, though perhaps I should have been rather more methodical in doing it in another. I have before remarked, that these texts rather contain a part of the judicial law, in the midst of which they stand recorded, than of the moral; and shew that the command of God which enjoined, that *if a man had enticed a maid and humbled her, he should make her his wife, and not put her away all his days*, was rather intended as a punishment to be inflicted on the offender for his baseness and lewdness, than as a sanction given by God to Polygamy.—But
whether

whether this law was ever enforced when the man was a married man, remains yet to be proved. You have indeed taken much pains to demonstrate that *a man* here must mean *any man*, married or not married, because your system cannot stand without it: But if I allow this, how can you disallow that *a woman* means *any woman*, married or not married? and yet you absolutely refuse to grant this, in your interpretation of that text, *Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*; as also where it is said, *Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another committeth adultery*. In both these instances you insist that *a woman* must mean a married woman only, because otherwise Polygamy cannot stand.

THE more I consider the primitive institution of marriage, the more I am convinced that Polygamy is not less contrary to the law of nature, than to the law of God: for

I. One woman only was created and given for the use and comfort of one man, whilst that man and woman were in a state of innocence in Paradise; and it is the business of Christianity to call us back as much as possible to that state.

II. When God peopled the world a second time, after the flood, it was without Polygamy, four men and four women only, who were wives to Noah and his three sons, were commanded to go into the ark [F]; and from them was the whole earth peopled.

III. Without entering into a minute discussion of your calculations concerning the exact number of males and females which are born in different nations, I believe it is a matter generally agreed on, that the males throughout the world are nearly one fifth more than the females [G]; so that if Po-

[F] *Gen.* vii. 13.

[G] *Siißmiller* Provost of St. Peter's at Berlin, made a calculation some years ago, by which it appeared, that throughout the King of Prussia's dominions, there were about 105 males to 100 females.

lygamy were universally practised, numbers of women must of necessity go without husbands, and thereby God's great design of forming the sexes for each other, must be frustrated.

IV. *If no man can serve two masters, because he will love the one and hate the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other; how much less can one man love, cherish, and comfort alike two wives? This seems so absolutely impossible, that I see not how any thing like God's original appointment of marriage and the mutual happiness of man and wife, can be maintained upon the principles of Polygamy; nay, so far from it, that it appears to me, that the only happy marriages, or rather the least unhappy ones, must be those where there is the most indifference between the parties; for where there is true love and affection, jealousy, if it finds ground to rest on, will be hard at work, and that being the most tormenting of all passions, whatever is the cause of exciting it, had better be absent*

than present, consequently the woman's hatred of her husband would make her less miserable than her love for him.—For any one to assert that a woman may have a true love and affection for her husband, and yet feel no jealousy at seeing him attached and given up to another, is at once to prove himself totally destitute of all sensibility, and ignorant of all the workings of human nature.—If therefore no man can (as before observed) *serve two masters*, there is still a greater impossibility that one man should, in the scriptural sense of the expression, cleave to more than one wife at a time, viz. in heart, spirit, and affection, as well as by a bodily union. Of this you are sensible, and therefore you would confine this *cleaving to the wife* merely to the latter, which certainly does not carry with it that purity of sentiment which the scripture language means to convey, and which is well illustrated by *cleaving unto the Lord*: i. e. having communion and fellowship with him; in which sense only the union between

between

tween the husband and wife is compared with that which subsists between Christ and his church.

In all these instances the law of God, and the law of nature are so blended together, that they cannot be separated.

I cannot come to a conclusion without making some few observations on the advertisement which immediately follows the title of your book. I mean not however to call in question what you say of the *importance* or of the *interesting* tendency of your TREATISE, nor whether you have indeed so mixed “the *utile dulci* as to have avoided that *tiresome dryness* which usually attends treatise-writing, and to have introduced *much variety of entertaining matter*.” This affects not the grand question at all: therefore you are to think of your THELYPHTHORA on these points, just as you please, and your readers will think of them as they please. What I object against in
that

that advertisement, is a very positive assertion, which seems hung out in the frontispiece, in order to strike the reader with horror, and to prejudice him in your favor, that “in the eye of our municipal laws, women are of less consequence than the beasts of the field; for it is *less penal* to seduce, defile, and abandon to prostitution and ruin a thousand women married or unmarried, than to steal, kill, or even maliciously to maim or wound an ox or a sheep.” In proof of this you refer to 22 and 23 Car. II. ch. 7, &c.—9 Geo. I. ch. 22.—I had like to have said, that there is a most palpable *falsity* in this assertion, but I will recall the word, and instead of *falsity* we will read *fallacy*. It is true, the above statutes make it felony to steal, kill, or maliciously wound an ox or a sheep, but what proof is this, that “women are of less consequence than the beasts of the field?” or indeed where is the analogy between our laws relative to the one and to the other, unless you can demonstrate from the acts which you have quoted, that

it is less criminal to *steal, kill, or maliciously wound* a wife or virgin, than to *steal, kill, or maliciously wound an ox or a sheep?* Suffer me therefore to inform you, that the persons of all women are so amply protected by our municipal laws, and their chastity is held so sacred, that not only the violation of it against their will is death to the offender without benefit of clergy, but even an *attempt* to commit a rape, is punishable by one of the most ignominious sentences that can be inflicted, viz. standing on the pillory, and this protection is not only extended to a wife or a virgin, but even to the most abandoned prostitute; and if the female be under ten years of age, then, even though she should consent to the act, the corrupter of her is adjudged to forfeit his life.—Where the females are of marriageable age, whether they themselves be married or not, though they should have had an intercourse with any man by their freest consent, still such man is liable to be severely fined, and to pay damages in proportion to his ability to the father or husband of the

the

the woman. To all this may be added, that to keep a brothel is punishable by fine, imprisonment, or pillory, according to the sentence of the court before which the party has been tried and convicted.

It may indeed appear rather presumptuous for a country justice of the peace (and I confess, we are most of us a very blundering wrong-headed tribe) to pretend to remind you who are so well skilled in all parts of our constitution of these things; but as we ourselves are seldom above receiving our instructions from our clerks, and are ready to sign (without reading) whatever they put before us, I flatter myself you will not think I mean to call in question your knowledge of, or acquaintance with any of the established laws of the nation, because I just take the liberty of whispering in your ear, what our clerks so frequently do to us, "Perhaps your worship does not *immediately recollect* that such and such a statute says so and so".

After

After all, there are certain cases wherein we have reason to lament that our laws punish petty offenders with the utmost rigor, whilst the most notorious villains are suffered to go free. And yet it is not possible for the wisest legislature to guard against this, nor is it owing to any defect in our present system, that it is so. The cause of this evil lies in the corrupt state of human nature. The cure must be looked for only at the hand of divine grace. Among these is the punishing with death, the afflicted wretch who steals money, goods, or even meat to support life to the value of one shilling, whilst the far greater robbers who increase their hoards by exorbitant premiums and usury, or who borrow large sums, perhaps to the distress of many families, without prospect of payment, in order to support their own extravagance, cannot be laid hold on as criminals.—And yet what can be done in such a case? To form proper penal laws against the two latter of these characters would be exceeding difficult, and the execution of them

them still more so.—To repeal those already made, and to suffer poverty to be pleaded in behalf of theft or robbery, would immediately expose the persons and property of every man, to all the horrors of rapine and plunder : and you of all people living, would dread the enacting of any law for superseding or mitigating the punishment of offenders, as I have frequently heard you say, and perhaps very justly, that sparing so many thieves and robbers from the gallows, is the cause of their increase. We may invent remedies for such or such evils, and when we have invented them, they may turn out worse than the diseases they are meant to cure. Among these remedies is that of introducing Polygamy by way of preventing adultery and fornication ; and it calls to my mind a story which the famed Voltaire once told me at Geneva, of a French clown, who jumped into a river in order to escape a shower of rain.

However,

However, that the doctrine of *Thelyphthora* does indeed tend to make women of less consequence than the harts of the wild, perhaps the following instance will serve to evince.

I am now for the last time to suppose Polygamy established by law in this kingdom, and I will also suppose that it has been so for about five or six years. My servant knocks at my study door, puts a paper into my hand, and tells me that a poor woman who is weeping in the passage with three young children, begs me to read it over; I find it to be as follows:

“ THE HUMBLE PETITION OF
“ Mary, wife of John Williams, shew-
“ eth, that your poor petitioner has been
“ married to the said John Williams, a
“ labouring man, for the space of ten years
“ and upwards; that he made your petiti-
“ oner a good and an industrious husband,
“ and maintained his family very decently
“ till about four years ago, when he mar-
“ ried

“ ried another woman, by whom he has
 “ two more children ; and after that mar-
 “ ried a third wife, who has at different
 “ times beaten your petitioner, as also his
 “ second wife, in the most barbarous man-
 “ ner, and turned us both out of doors :
 “ besides that the wages, which the said
 “ John Williams earned by his work, were
 “ but just sufficient to maintain your poor
 “ petitioner and three children when he
 “ had no other wife ; so that if your pe-
 “ titioner had not been turned out of the
 “ house, she and her young children had
 “ no other prospect but that of beggary
 “ and starving, which still your petitioner
 “ (by the grace of God) had rather submit
 “ to, than to turn thief or prostitute to
 “ supply her wants, which the second wife
 “ of the said John Williams has done.
 “ Your petitioner therefore humbly hopes
 “ that all good Christians will pity her de-
 “ plorable situation, and that of her poor
 “ destitute infants, and your petitioner will
 “ as in duty bound sincerely pray.

MARY WILLIAMS,
 her + mark.

Now is this case at all unlikely to happen upon the introduction of Polygamy? Nay, is there not all the reason in the world to suppose, that if not exactly the same, yet similar cases of wretchedness must abound in every corner of the land? And surely, whatever is the cause of this abject distress, must be the means of exposing women and children to too much greater hardships and miseries than the beasts of the field are subject to.

ALTHOUGH I have the honor of standing in a two-fold capacity among those to whom your *Treatise* is dedicated, viz. as a governor of the Lock Hospital, and as a member of the Legislature; yet you will readily suppose from the foregoing pages, that I think it absolutely incumbent upon me in each of those capacities to express my intire disapprobation of that *Treatise*; *First*, as being totally repugnant to the scriptures of truth. *Secondly*, as being pregnant with the most pernicious consequences towards the state, and calculated (however unintentionally by you)

you) to multiply all that train of evils which it would speciously appear to redress or prevent. I assure you, dear Sir, not from hearsay evidence, but from certain knowledge, that the altercations, dissensions, and prejudices against religion, which Polygamy in embryo has occasioned at a considerable distance from the capital, not only in two counties which are contiguous to me, but in that most respectable and most indulgent county which I have the honor to represent, have run so high, that I should dread its introduction by law worse than if any member were to move for leave to bring in a bill for the establishment of the plague. And though I hope the real sense I have of the deficiency of my own abilities, will ever prevent me from giving the house much trouble by my loquacity, and though upon most occasions, I shall probably content myself with giving an honest independent *aye* or *no*, yet if your system were ever to become the object of the legislature (of which however I see not the least prospect), I am persuaded I should not be able

to

to contain myself, but should esteem it my most indispensable duty, to bear an open testimony against it in the senate, as well as from the press.

Though it be a matter of too much notoriety, that the author of *Thelyphthora* is a reigning toast among the jovial sons of pleasure at their clubs and taverns, yet I should not have mentioned this circumstance, but as it tends to demonstrate the character and stamp of those who wish well to Polygamy, by the establishment of which alone, the husband who is fond of variety, or the young debauchee who is yet unmarried, can hope to get possession of the persons of those women who otherwise would not consent to their solicitations, and this not merely without feeling their consciences checked for the sin they might otherwise think themselves guilty of, but all the while congratulating themselves, that they are discharging their duty as faithful servants of God, and good members of the community. Thus Polygamy is made the *dernier resort* of (otherwise despairing) lewdness, and

even covers the vilest debauchery, under the sanctimonious *doublet* of obedience to the divine law, and utility towards the state; whilst those who disavow the principles and practice of Polygamy, are held forth as laboring under the disease of a scrupulous conscience, and as being fast bound with the shackles of ignorance, superstition, and priestcraft.

IT is now time that I should put an end to this painful epistle, which though circumscribed within a much narrower compass, will I believe be found to contain a reply to every material argument you have made use of, at least so far as the doctrine of Polygamy is concerned.

It may indeed be objected, that an answer to two octavo volumes, cannot possibly be confined to the limits of a book not much larger than a pamphlet, but I am under the necessity of remarking that your whole Treatise would not greatly have exceeded the bulk of my letter, had it been freed from its multiplied repetitions, and had

had you omitted pages without number, which answer no other end than to bias the reader in your favor, but which in truth and reality, have just the same force in whatever cause they are brought to support. I mean your censure of those who obscure or adulterate the pure word of God by such comments of their own devising, as *error, prejudice, and superstition*, may direct, *adopting sound for sense*, setting themselves up to be *wiser than God*, walking in the steps of *Socinus, Mahomet* [H], and Ce-

[H] As this false prophet was the grand patron of Polygamy, he must feel himself very awkward at being so frequently introduced into the company of Monogamists, and would certainly be much more at ease among those of his own sentiments on this head.

The learned Mr. Sale, in his translation of the Koran, p. 204, *note*, mentions that one of the great reproaches cast on Mahomet by the Jews, “was on account of the great number of his wives. For the Jews said, *that if he was a true prophet, his care and attention would be employed about something else than women and the getting of children.*—It may be observed (adds Mr. Sale) that it is a maxim of the Jews that nothing is more repugnant to prophecy than carnality.”

152 *The Blessings of Polygamy, &c.*
rinthus, and setting Christ and Moses at va-
riance.

Now it is certain, that a writer usually makes more converts to his opinion by declamation of this sort, than by any other method, because it at once raises the indignation of the reader against such sophisticators of God's word, whilst it banishes all suspicion that the person who is expressing his abhorrence of their practice, is himself found to adopt it; yet by these means an easy way is made for the introduction of an author's sentiments into the mind which is already so strongly prepossessed in his favor.

Far, very far be it from me, to affirm that you have done any thing of this sort, in order to deceive or mislead the sincere inquirer after truth. I bear you witness, that the honesty and integrity of your heart set you quite above the reach of such unfair dealing: but an overweening attachment to a favorite notion, has led you to conclude, that whatever parts of God's word seemed

to militate against that notion, must have been hitherto misunderstood; and hence I am sorry to say, that you have compelled scripture to stoop to your system, rather than suffer your system to stand or fall by the decisions of scripture.

I know that you have complained heavily of the many letters of remonstrance which were sent you, before the publication of your book, to desire you to suppress it. I can only say, it is pity you did not attend to them; for if it be a received maxim, that *vox populi* is *vox Dei*, how much more *vox amicorum*, how much more yet, *vox Christianorum!*

I find by your preface, that you submitted the perusal of your manuscript to some *learned and pious friends*: though I dare not lay claim to either of these adjectives, yet I do lay claim to a very great share in the substantive, and therefore beg to assure you, that if I had had the honor of being ranked among those friends, so far from joining them in their approbation, I should have

have been ready to have done what Mrs. *Ainsworth* is reported to have done by the manuscript of her husband's dictionary, just as it was ready for the press, viz. to have committed it to the flames, for no other reason, than because the good laborious man (who by the bye found one wife quite a match for him) had the misfortune to break one of her favorite tea-cups: but my conduct would certainly have proceeded from much better motives than that of revenge; viz. love to my friend, love to God, and zeal for the interests of the gospel.

I would wish to convince you; but if I cannot do this, be assured nothing is further from my thoughts than to offend you; and therefore if you have found any thing throughout this letter which you may think bears rather too hard upon you, let me intreat you not to look upon it as levelled against you, but what I am fully persuaded are the errors you hold.

With heart-felt grief, I see that some eminent and faithful ministers of the gospel
have

have imbibed your sentiments, and are even earnest in the propagation of them, whilst others are secretly won over to them, but through fear of domestic uneasiness, or other motives, do not choose openly to avow them.

These things I *do* see; but how far the evil will yet spread, I cannot see. I trust however, that the firm conviction I have in my own mind, of the great impropriety of your having sent the *Treatise* in question abroad into the world, will plead sufficient apology for this public address, from one who has always esteemed it both an honor and happiness to subscribe himself,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Your most sincere

and affectionate friend,

RICHARD HILL

P. S. Your *Treatise* had been published full half a year before I could persuade myself to read it, which will account for my having been so long in sending out my answer to it.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

I THINK myself in a manner obligated to publish the following Letter, in order to convince the reader, that I used every method in my power to avoid this controversy, by trying to prevent my much esteemed Friend from sending abroad his *Treatise*; which I hope will plead my apology for any repetition or sameness of argument, which may appear both in the letter and in the address.

A

L E T T E R

TO THE

REV. MARTIN MADAN;

My very dear friend,

I WAS exceedingly concerned to hear a few days ago, from one who has a sincere regard for you, that you are going to publish a book upon the lawfulness of Polygamy. I remember to have often heard you deliver your sentiments on the subject to particular friends, but never could have imagined that you would have sent them abroad into the world; and now beseech you to consider well the tendency of such a step, before you advance any further. Even

M

suppose

suppose all, and more than all you could wish to have effected by the publication; suppose you should convince thousands that they might, without sin, have more wives than one; what end will this answer? What good will it do you? What glory will it bring to God? What advantage will it be of to society? To say the least, it will take up a great deal of your time, which might certainly be much better spent. It can render no service to the cause of christianity, unless you can also prove that every additional wife will bring with her an additional stock of grace. And with regard to society, it is likely to bring with it an innumerable train of evils; and the more, as all the passions, lusts and corruptions of human nature, will be so strongly inclined to favor your doctrine, that they will unite all their force to proselyte the judgment; and then who shall dare to split the difference between two wives and two hundred? And if this be allowed on the man's side, you will not doubt but there are females amongst us to be found, who will plead for an extension
of

of the privilege to their own sex. I do not say this age is worse than former ones, but I fancy you will agree with me, that it is not much better, and that we do not live in times wherein it is necessary to help mankind to a sanction for taking more wives than one, especially when they are well tired of the first.

I should do you the highest injustice as a man of sense, and as a christian, to suppose you had not some good and useful design in view by this intended publication. Yet what that design may be, I cannot at all conceive: But I evidently discern the most dreadful and pernicious consequences, if you should make many or any converts to your opinion; and if you do not make converts, *cui bono scribere?* It is all lost labour and waste paper. In the church of God, many may be staggered and puzzled, many will be ashamed and grieved; and lifeless professors will be gazing about at the *Locke* and *Tottenbam* for some new object of delight, that when they have lost every other mark

of faintship, they may at least follow the examples of some Old Testament saints, in having plenty of wives and concubines. And now I am upon this point, I remember that my dear friend's grand argument in support of his doctrine was that when the scripture mentions the polygamy of the Patriarchs, they are never censured on this account. But does this prove that what they did was no spot in their characters, or that it was agreeable to the mind and will of God? This, I think, would be a dangerous position, and might be equally urged as a plea for Noah's drunkenness, or Lot's drunkenness and incest together; none of which sins are particularly reprehended in the persons of whom they are recorded. I would wave disputes how far the Jewish worthies (though saved by faith in the same Redeemer) fell short of the privileges of those who live under the clearer light of the gospel; but certainly you will allow there was a difference between them; the former *saw through a glass darkly, the times of reformation were not fully come*: And as in the

matter of *putting away their wives*, God bore with them, *because of the hardness of their hearts*, so how far he might do so in their taking a plurality of wives, is, perhaps, not for us to determine; but certainly *from the beginning it was not so*, Adam had only his Eve, though from her the whole earth was to be peopled.

Till, therefore, it can be proved that Polygamy is allowed by the gospel of Christ, the example of believers under the legal dispensation, will not sufficiently authorize the practice of it; and so far from being allowed, it appears to me to be most clearly forbidden; for if our blessed Lord condemns the repudiating one wife and taking another, except for the cause of fornication, it is the same thing, as if he had said in express words, that a man should have only one wife at a time. And when St. Paul says, “To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband,” the certain conclusion to be drawn from the injunction is, that every man

who takes any other woman, doth *not* avoid fornication, any more than the woman who takes any other man does. And indeed the whole 7th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, is founded on the supposition (as a matter taken for granted by the whole christian church) that the husband has or can have but one wife, any more than the wife can have but one husband. Do, my dear Sir, read and pray over the whole chapter, and surely conviction must accompany the word.

I must further remark, that the allusion which the Apostle draws between the marriage bond and the union which subsists between Christ and his spouse, or his body, the church, would be a very unjust one, and would fail in almost every instance, if believers might have more wives than one at a time; and instead of saying that "*they two* (the husband and wife) shall be one flesh," he ought to have left the matter more at large, and should have said, "*they three, or they four, shall be one flesh,*" which carries

an absurdity and contradiction in the very mention. Neither could he with any propriety have exhorted "every man to love his wife even as himself," as that would be confining that affection to one alone, which each wife had an equal right to share in; but as he speaks in the singular, and not in the plural number, this proves to demonstration, that a plurality of wives was never thought of, much less allowed by this chosen vessel.

But not to multiply scriptures, (though many more might be produced) consider the judgment and practice of the whole Catholic church from the very beginning. Can any one example be produced of the toleration of Polygamy? On the contrary, have not almost all christian nations, our own in particular, punished it with death, as an heinous offence against the laws of God, and the welfare of society?

But I will go one step further with regard to the Old Testament saints; I will even
suppose

suppose that God allowed them a plurality of wives; still this will not prove the point that Polygamy is lawful to Christians; for the only standard of right and wrong is the command and will of God; and when God wills or commands a thing to be done, then the doing of it ceases to be sinful, though abstracted from that command, it might be a notorious act of wickedness. Thus it was no sin in Samuel to hew the king of the Amalekites in pieces; though if God had not willed and commanded it, Samuel had been guilty of a very abominable murder. So to marry the brother's wife, was forbidden by the Levitical law, as an incestuous commerce; yet when the brother died without issue, it was actually enjoined the next brother to marry the widow, and to raise up seed unto his brother; and if he did not do so, he incurred the heavy displeasure of God, as in the case of Onan. All I argue from these instances, is, that God, as sovereign of all men, has full right to permit or order that at one time, or upon one occasion, which he has an equal right to forbid at others;

others; and therefore that he might suffer that to be done for his own wise purposes by Abraham, David, &c. under the Jewish œconomy, *that made nothing perfect*, which now he has the same right to prohibit to believers under the meridian of the gospel.

But now suppose all these arguments (and I might produce many more) have no weight with you; still let me return to my former question, What good is your book likely to do? If it be not against the express laws of God, I am sure it is against the express laws of the land; and subjection to the powers that are, has always been your avowed principle. Why, then, would you deviate from it in the present instance, when in proportion to your known character as a minister of Christ, and to your abilities as a lawyer and casuist, your book is likely to create confusion in the state, as well as in private families? Can you pray for God's blessing on your undertaking? Will the completion of it bring you any comfort on your death bed? Who, think you, will be benefited

benefited by it? Will the community, will individuals be the better for it? Probably the officers of Doctor's Commons may get more grist to their mill by the additional number of divorces it may occasion; (though by the bye, these gentlemen have tolerable reason to be satisfied in this respect) and probably the author of the trials for adultery, will soon extend his filthy pages from five volumes to fifty.

But I find I am extending my letter to a tiresome length. Bear with me, my dear friend, and forgive me this wrong; and if you still think I have been deficient in arguments, suffer me to supply the want of them by intreaties. I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, that you will not send out under the sanction of your very respectable name, a book of such a dangerous tendency; and if you have any love for your christian friends, (which of all others, I have no reason to doubt) any concern for the glory of God, the peace of his church, your own reputation, and the
good

Rev. Martin Madan. 167

good of mankind, that you will not publish the *Treatise* in question: Or, if this be already done, that you will forbid the further sale of it, and thereby remedy the mischief as much as possible.

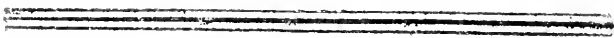
But after all, I hope I am combating a man of straw; and that you have no such design in view, as I have been informed of; to be assured of which, from your own pen, will afford a real satisfaction to,

My dear Friend,

Your's most sincerely and affectionately,

RICHARD HILL.

Harehfeve, Feb. 2, 1780.



A

W O R D

T O T H E

R E A D E R.

IT is possible some persons may have the curiosity to examine *The Blessings of Polygamy*, who yet give themselves little or no trouble about *the blessings of eternity*. To such I beg leave to put a very interesting question, and yet, I must own, a most unfashionable, a most unpolite, and, in general, a most unwelcome question. It is this. Have you ever seriously thought of death? Nay, startle not, for it is by no means foreign to the purpose: So far from it, that every

every word I have been writing, and every word you have been reading, has a view to this one question only. Why have I been proving the absolute unlawfulness of Polygamy? Not to gratify curiosity; not to settle a point of no importance; but because I am fully persuaded that the practice of it is highly offensive to God, and dangerous to the souls of men. For the very same reason, therefore, that I would write a dissuative from Polygamy, I would write a dissuative from every other sin; and for the same reason why I would wish to avoid every sin, I would wish to meet death with confidence; and this certainly cannot be done, without I seriously and frequently bring the hour of death to view. Surely, then, this is sufficient reason for resuming the question. Have you ever seriously thought of death? If you have not, I think you will hardly deny that you are wholly unfit to launch into eternity. If you have seriously thought on death, then remember that *as the sting of death is sin, so the strength of sin is the law*; 1 Cor. xv. 56. and that before this law

there

there is none righteous, no not one; forasmuch as all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: So that every door of hope by man's own imperfect obedience, being absolutely shut up, there is no other way of recovering the Divine favor, but through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, Rom. iii. 10. 19, 20, &c. &c.

You may try to stifle the convictions of your own mind, by the soothing opium of pleasure, or by hiding yourself in the wild thickets of infidelity, still conscience will at times find you out, and tell you, with an unwelcome voice, that though you are the creature of a day, you have nevertheless an immortal part within you, which can never never die, and that you must very soon appear before the awful tribunal of an holy God, where all the actions of your life, and even the most secret thoughts of your heart, will be laid open before an assembled world.

LET me intreat you seriously to consider these things. Believe me, I should be sincerely

cerely grieved to leave no other impression on your mind than a jingle of *Polygamy*, *Bigamy* and *Monogamy*; and therefore that the foregoing Address may answer some salutary end, I hope you will not think I impose a hard task on you, in requesting you to return to your chamber, and there *to commune with your own heart*, if it be but for one quarter of an hour; and with a pious ejaculation to *him who seeth in secret*, beg that you may know the real state of your soul, if (like that of the rich presumptuous fool in the gospel) it should *this night be required of you*.

F I N I S.

T H E
COBLER'S LETTER

TO THE
Author of *Thelyphthora*,

INTENDED AS A
S U P P L E M E N T
T O

Mr. HILL'S ADDRESS,

INTITLED,

“*The Blessings of Polygamy.*”

*A Brother offended is harder to be won than a sitting
City.* PROV. xviii. 19.

L O N D O N :

Sold by J. MATHEWS, in the Strand; C. DILLY, in the
Poultry; and by J. FIDOWES, in Shrewsbury.

M D C C L X X X I .

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

PRINTED BY

JOHN BURNET

IN THE YEAR 1680

AND

1681

THE
COBLER'S LETTER
TO THE
AUTHOR OF THELYPHITHORA.

LONDON, May 5, 1781.

REV. and DEAR SIR,

WHYY are you so much displeas'd? I am sure there is no intentional unkindness towards you, no design'd *asperity of expression* or *personal reflection* which might either *hurt you in your own mind*, or *injure your character in the sight of the world*, throughout my late publication intitled "The Blessings of Polygamy." So far from it, whilst you are complaining of my having treated you with *too little respect*, I have been greatly blamed for hav-

ing treated you with *too much*. I stand convicted however by your reproof for having addressed you by name; there certainly would have been more delicacy in not having done so, as you had not publicly declared yourself to be the author of *Thelyphtora*: and when my book was about half printed off, I was aware that you would blame me on that account. But as you always and upon every occasion acknowledged the production to be your's, and had, in several publications previous to mine, been addressed as the writer of it, without once disowning it, I really thought that any attempt on my part to screen my friend from public view, would have appeared almost as ridiculous as the command of *Sir John Falstaff* to his page to stand close by him that he might escape the eyes of the *chief Justice*. I am sure you will give me full credit when I assure you that I most sincerely wish, *first*, that you were *not* the author of *Thelyphtora*; *secondly*, that nobody knew that you *were* the author: And if you believe these two declarations, you can never think that I took a pleasure in making you pass for that author against your own inclinations.

Another

Another reason occurred to me for addressing you by name. I was happy to let all the world know the regard and friendship I had for you; and this could not be done, at least not so effectually, if I had considered you as anonymous.

Again, After what you yourself have said of *Theophrastus*, as being one of the most *important and interesting publications that have appeared since the Reformation*, and judged to be so by many *eminently learned and pious men* [A], and calculated both to *entertain and edify* the reader, I must necessarily suppose that though a modest diffidence forbade you to affix your name to it yourself, yet that you would rather esteem it a compliment than an injury to announce to the world the author of such a performance.

These are the chief of my reasons for having addressed you by name; and I hope you will admit them as good ones.

[A] I know not who the author particularly means by these *eminently learned and pious men*: but it is very certain that some who both for *learning and piety* are exceeded by few, do at this time, form a very different idea of *Theophrastus*, than what they did on the first hasty perusal of it; and would be sincerely grieved to have their names made use of as abettors of it.

If you will I shall be happy ; but whether you will or not, I ask your pardon for having done it.

The next complaint you make against me, is, for not having submitted my manuscript to your perusal before it went to the press.

But what reason could you have to expect this, after the friendly letter of remonstrance which I wrote you so many months before ? Had I not at least as much cause to expect you would have shewn me your manuscript as any other person who had the revival of it ? But you judged that I should have discouraged the publication of it ; and you judged right. The very same conclusion therefore that I suppose prevented you from letting me see your *Treatise on female ruin* (as well as your letter to *Richard Hill, Esq.* at the end of your third volume) prevented me from asking your opinion on my late piece, *viz.* I took it for granted that you would as heartily disapprove my *Answer*, as I should have disapproved your *Treatise* ; and that you would have been for taking out so much of my own matter, and for putting in so many insertions of your own, which

I in

I in my turn, should have been for taking out afterwards, that between us both we should have brought the poor *Blessings of Polygamy*, into the situation of *Ajip's* man, who had two wives (my friend will excuse the comparifon) the one of whom plucked out all his black hairs, the other all his grey ones.

A third complaint my friend has against me, is, that I treat the doctrine of Polygamy with *facetious raillery*, and *luculent cases* to make it appear *ridiculous*, and that I *shock* him with the *peremptoriness* of my *determinations*.

On which side the most *peremptory determinations* are to be found let all readers judge. I will be silent.

As to the *ridicule* and *facetious raillery* you talk of, I cannot but think them very allowable, if they prove the means of exposing a practice which in its consequences must be as pernicious to the welfare of society, as destructive to the peace of private families. I have often heard my friend speak in the highest terms of Mr. *Vincent Alfop's* book intitled, *Antifozzo*, which from the beginning to the end consists of the most acute raillery against *Doctor Sherlock*

on account of some expressions in a piece published by the *Doctor*, intituled, if I remember right, "The knowledge of Christ."

If indeed I had made any of *God's dispensations* the subjects of raillery, I should think my friend did me no unkindness at all in ranking me (indirectly at least) with Lord *Belingbroke* or *Voltaire*. But I deny that Polygamy ever was of *God's institution*, or any part of *his dispensations*.——But, if it were not for a little *facetious raillery*, and a few pleasant stories, what must have been the fate of *Thelyphthora*? If, notwithstanding all the *variety of entertaining matter* with which that *Treatise* abounds, any person could be so stupid as to *yawn* and *nod* at the reading it, as the whole court of Charles the Second did at the hearing *Doctor South's* sermons; [B] I say, what must it have been if the author had not by mixing

[B] Old *South* a witty churchman reckon'd,
Was preaching once to *Charles* the second.
But far too serious for a court
Which of all preaching made a sport,
The good and zealous man of God,
Observ'd his audience *yawn* and *nod*,
And finding nothing wou'd avail,
Call'd to the Earl of *Lauderdale*,
" My Lord, why 'tis a monstrous thing,
" You snore so loud, you'll wake the king."

the *utile dulci* delivered it from the *tiresome dryness* which usually attends *Treatise-writing*? Besides, where shall we find a more lively sally of wit and *facetious raillery* than the author of *Thelyphthora* has entertained us with in comparing *Mr. Hill* to a cobbler, because *Mr. Hill* owns he does not understand Hebrew? You remember the old proverb, says he, *Ne Sutor, &c.* Yes, my friend, I remember it well. And I think you will not soon forget it. The whole proverb runs thus. *Ne Sutor ultra crepidam.* In English, “*Cobbler keep to thy Last.*” Or more literally “*Let not the Cobbler go beyond his Last.*” But when applied to the purpose of the author of *Thelyphthora*, (I will put on the cap because it fits me) “*Let not Mr. Hill pretend to be a critic or philologist, at least not a Hebrew critic, whilst he remains totally unacquainted with that language.*” Why truly if *Mr. Hill* had had the advantage of a skilful Hebræen friend at his elbow, or who lived at a few yards distance from him, and if he had been willing to have availed himself of such advantage, he might not have made that contemptible diminutive figure in the eyes of a learned *Colossus* he now does. But
to

to own the truth, *Mr. Hill* (feigned as the sense of the deficiency of his own abilities may be) chose rather to pass for a *Cobler* as he is, than to exalt himself on stilts not his own, or to strut about like *Æsop's* daw in borrowed plumes, or *Æsop's* ass in the lion's skin.

I remember well last winter when Admiral *Keppel* was speaking in the house of Commons, he said he would not from thenceforth call *Sir Hugh Palliser* by his own name, but by the name of *the Governor of Greenwich Hospital*, which he accordingly did in every other speech he made during the different times the business relative to the *Portsmouth* Court Martial, or anything else which concerned the Navy was debated.—So,—*Si parva liceat componere magnis*, every time I have occasion to introduce my own insignificant name, instead of *Richard Hill*, I shall call myself *the Cobler*. And if we consider into what great and respectable company I shall introduce myself by the appellation, perhaps there may be more pride than humility in my assuming it. Nay, I know not whether it may not be at least as honorable as being stiled *Governor of Greenwich Hospital*. For

First.

First. We have had, (far be it from me to say we *now* have) cobblers at the helm of Government, even at the head of all our public affairs. These I would stile *State Cobblers*. Such persons set themselves to patch and mend, and mend and patch again, till they cannot make both *ends* meet at the *Last*. By which means they suffer the whole nation to go barefoot; and after having cobbled and cobbled, till they have cobbled away all the leather, 'tis well if they don't some time or other bring Englishmen to wear *wooden shoes*. These cobblers are happy when they can get the length of any royal foot, and often try to measure the feet of the members of the House of Commons.

N. B. This class of cobblers make much use of the *hammer* and *pincers* in their *work*; and though they *lacker* it well when it is finished, yet it will seldom bear the day-light. Besides the *blacking* they use is apt to come off, and sadly sullies the fingers.

Secondly. We have very exalted Cobblers in Divinity. There are plenty of these

these in our large Collegiate cities, who (like their brethren of the *black apron*;) carry on their trade in *Stalls*, though they prefer cobling on a *Bench* when it is in their power. And whilst they are in their *Stalls*, you may sometimes hear them *singing amain*, thereby shewing that they are either well pleased with their work or their wages. However, these coblers in general, (for the picture I give of the most is by no means intended as a representation of all, but very far from it) do very little business in their profession, scarcely mending a *sole* from one year's end to another; and what little they do attempt, is with that sort of leather which is *against the grain*, or as I believe shoemakers call it *black of the grain*. And multitudes among them if they do but cobble a little now and then on a Sunday, think this sufficient reason for being idle all the rest of the week.

I might shew in several more instances (but let these suffice) that there are many great men who are coblers in all professions, and that therefore there is no shame at all in my being dubbed *a cobbler in criticism* by the learned author of *Thelyphthora*.

—From

—From henceforth therefore I am—“*the
Cobler.*”—But to the point,

I.

You object that the cobbler charges you with recommending an *indiscriminate* and *unlimited* practice of Polygamy, and wanting a law to establish it: and then you bring quotations from *Thelyphthora* to prove that I have either misunderstood or misrepresented your meaning. Yet in these very quotations you affirm Polygamy in general to be both *lawful* and *innocent in itself*, in many cases *expedient*, in some *duty*, and only sinful by *abuse* or *excess*. However, let me transcribe your own words.

“ That Polygamy is lawful in itself, and
“ in many cases expedient, in some duty,
“ none can deny who will yield to the tes-
“ timony of the scriptures, and plain mat-
“ ter of fact. But where it is entered
“ upon with no other view than to pam-
“ per the appetite, and to indulge a love
“ of variety, it degenerates into evil, and
“ seems to be to marriage, what gluttony,
“ drunkenness and excess of apparel are to
“ food and raiment—a *sinful*, because a
“ forbidden abuse of *lawful* and *necessary*
“ things.”

And

And would my friend attempt to prove from hence that he is not a *maintainer* and *recommender* of *indiscriminate and unlimited Polygamy*? What! when he compares it to our very meat, and drink, and cloathing, without which no man whatever can exist? I readily allow that you are speaking against the *abuse* or *excess* of these things, and not against the lawful use of them, therefore the drift of your argument must be to prove that though a moderate use of meat, drink, and apparel be expedient and necessary for all men, but gluttony, drunkenness, and pride of dress are abominable and sinful, so a moderate use of Polygamy is *denied to none*, and only becomes sinful when indulged to excess (and who is to define what is meant by an *excess of Polygamy*) and in order to pamper the libidinous appetite.—Giving your reasoning it's full scope, this is what it must amount to; and the very same thing may be said even of the use of the marriage bed itself. And indeed in the above quotation, as you do in every other part of your performance, (particularly in a note in your third volume, p. 94. which I have only just dipped into, though I intend, *if God spare my life*

to

to labor through it) you put marriage and Polygamy intirely upon the same footing [C]. 'Tis in vain my friend offers his qualifying passages whilst these are his avowed sentiments, and whilst in so many other parts of his book he gives as general an indulgence for the practice of Polygamy as the pope himself does for whoredom, by licencing the public stews at *Rome*. Had you pursued any regular plan in your *Treatise*, and not run from one thing to another in the loose unconnected manner you have done, it would have been more easy to have followed you throughout; but this is certain, that whatever title your different chapters may bear, Polygamy, Polygamy, Polygamy is the great point in view.—Polygamy, Polygamy, Polygamy the constant burden of the song.

However, let the cobbler now put a plain question or two, by which, if you

[C] The note runs as follows.—“The authority on which this practice (*Polygamy*) being the same on which *marriage itself* is prohibited, in so many instances unknown to the *scriptures*, must, to be sure, be truly respectable!”

The author of *Thelyphthora* allows nobody to speak in a way of sneer and sarcasm but himself.

will

will answer explicitly, your sentiments may perhaps be better understood.

1st. Is it lawful in the sight of God for any man who has a wife (and I will add, children by that wife) to make his proposals and to take another in her life-time?— Would he commit sin in so doing?

2dly. As you state perverseness of temper in the woman to be a ground for Polygamy, I should be glad to know who is to be the judge of this perverseness of temper? Who is to determine whether it may not be wholly owing to the tyrannical behavior or want of affection in the husband? Upon this vague notion, every man might become a Polygamist where he and his wife had no right to demand the *sitch of bacon*. The idea that a man and his wife are coupled not only *for better for worse*, but for life also, causes much mutual forbearance, and prevents many a conjugal dispute: but whilst the husband can think himself at liberty to take a *second* or a *third*, whenever *Madam* is not quite so pleasant as she might be, would not this be the means of creating quarrels without number, and threatenings without end; especially when the husband happened to cast his eye on any particular

particular object of delight, whom he wished to have the enjoyment of? In such case, might he not say, "Well, I have no-
" thing to do, but to go home and teaze
" my wife and put her out of humor, and
" then that dear creature may be my own." Vain indeed would be the author of *The掖thora's* specious qualifying sentences to restrain such a man from his purpose; especially whilst the same author tells him with the same breath, that Polygamy is *a link in the chain of God's dispensations*, and is in itself both *lawful* and *innocent*.

As to the cases of *Lazacy*, or of absolute *Barrenness* on the side of the woman, I would rather be silent on these points than discuss them: only, I would briefly observe, that if the purport of your book had been to prove that under such circumstances divorce ought to be obtained from our courts of law, and the man have leave to marry again, I should not have disturbed you in the quiet possession of your opinion; though if we had talked the matter over in private, I should have observed that a thing of that sort ought to be entered upon with great deliberation; since the woman who might at one time be disor-

dered in her senses, might not perhaps always continue so; and seeing that *children and the fruit of the womb* were pronounced by the mouth of inspiration to be *a gift and heritage that cometh of the Lord*, therefore she who at one time might be accounted a *barren woman*, might afterwards (even many years afterwards) *keep house* and be *a joyful mother of children*. And should this be the case, the highest injury would be done to the first wife, by putting her away and taking another. I might also have added that as no trials can befall a good man without the over-ruling hand of God's providence, he should endeavor to exercise a spirit of faith, patience, resignation and prayer, whilst he is under them; and that though we are permitted to use means to extricate ourselves out of them, yet we must see to it that they are *lawful* means, and such as are warranted by God's holy will and word.

II.

The cobbler is censured for saying that the author of *Thelyphthora* explodes all external marriage ceremony as *superstitious priestcraft*.

My reasons for this supposition are grounded upon the author's whole chapter of marriage, the substance and purport of which must be well remembered by those who have read his *Treatise*, and from which it is clear, that though he acknowledges the expediency of an outward recognition of marriage for the purposes of society, yet he lays it down as a certain position that neither contract nor external ceremony are at all necessary (in a religious view) before the parties come together, and that the single act of bodily union is the only true scriptural marriage.

III.

The cobbler is told by the author of *Tkelyphthora*, that “ he meets with no such cases as that of Lady *A*— and Sir *Thomas A*—; nor as that of the humble petition of *Mary*, the wife of *John Williams*—nor of women of the *St. Giles's* breed, crying *murders* about the streets, as the consequences of the *Jewish* system.”

This is no reason at all why they would not be very frequent in *England* if Polygamy were established among us. But I am

far from believing that Polygamy was ever much in practice among the *Jews*, and even where it was practised, I doubt not but the mischiefs attending it were in many cases very evident. One thing however is certain, which is, that the cobbler has given the author of *Thelyphthora* a *pinching shoe* by the introduction of the cases before-mentioned, and therefore he affects to treat them with contempt. However, in your next piece, (for I understand we are to have *more last words* of the author of *Thelyphthora*,) I desire you will give me the satisfaction of knowing your sentiments on those cases, particularly on that of king *Charles* the second and *Nell Gwyn*, the duchess of *Portsmouth*, or indeed any other of his mistresses; for upon your plan, I see no more harm of his keeping a dozen than one, provided he were the first man who *became one flesh with them*, and provided he persisted in taking them to his bed one after another as long as he lived. But more particularly still, I beg you will inform the cobbler and the public what you *do* say, or *can* say, in the case proposed in the *Blessings of Polygamy* of a single woman filiating her child before you on a married man. As

a justice of the peace, you are obliged to put the law in force against him.—As a clergyman, you must tell him that he took his own wife in order to cleave *to her alone, forsaking all others.*—But as the author of *Theophrastus*, I am quite at a loss to know how you would address the parties; especially if the man informed you that his own wife were *deceas'd* or *in-danger'd*.

I hope also you will not forget to tell us your authority for saying that *Luther* and the other Protestant divines *unanimously declared* in the case of the *Language* of *H. C.* that it was *not contrary to the law of God* for a man to take another wife his first being alive [D].

IV.

The author of *Theophrastus* says a man might *maliciously* recruit either of these (a

[D] How the author of *Theophrastus* can possibly think of prosing the Reformers, whether at home or abroad, into his service, is to me in it an unaccountable, especially after the quarrel I brought him *Luther* against the Peccanians of the Anabaptists; and when *Beza* wrote an explicit treatise against Peccanism, which is noticed in *Calvin* with the most express approbation. As to the sentiments of our *English* Reformers, they may be pretty well known by the marriage service, and the homily against adultery.

wife or a virgin) and not be liable to death, as he would be in the case of *maliciously wounding* cattle.

Here the cobling country justice, must again take the liberty of reminding his friend *learned in the law*, that he is under a very great mistake in this assertion, for by the act commonly called the *Coventry act* (made on account of the maiming Sir *John Coventry*, in the reign of *Charles* the second) *maliciously maiming* or *wounding* any subject is made *death*.

The cases of a rape and of a man having intercourse with a woman by her own free consent, or even seducing [*D*] her, are very different. In the former, the oath of the woman alone may safely be taken, as she can have no interest in swearing against the man; in the latter, a door would necessarily be opened to a thousand frauds and impositions. Therefore, though I agree with you intirely, that every unmarried man who seduces or debauches a virgin ought to make her his wife; yet I also say, that

[*D*] *Query*. Upon the principles of *Thelyphthora*, whether such a thing as *seduction* (any more than fornication) can or ever did exist, since the first intercourse of man with a woman is by him deemed a marriage?

that compulsion upon every accusation of that sort, by the woman's testimony only, (and no other can hardly ever be had) would be attended with very dreadful consequences. However, where such a law could be enforced, it ought to be enforced. And if this were all you had endeavored to prove, your design would certainly have met with general approbation; though instead of three *heavy* volumes, you might have comprized the whole of what you had to say within the compass of three pages, and thereby have saved yourself much time and trouble, have saved your readers the sum of fifteen shillings each, and have saved the cobbler and the monthly and critical reviewers a very tiresome piece of employment.

V.

You ask me how far from "*implying* "*approbation* it is where an action is *permitted*?"—I answer, it is often very far. Will my friend say, that because God *permitted* David's adultery and murder, he therefore *approved* of them? Take heed lest by losing sight of this material distinction, you make God the author of all sin.

Besides,

Besides, give this sentiment its full scope, that God's *permission* and his *approbation* cannot be separated, and it will go near to make the most abominable wickedness the sure road to heaven.

VI.

I am pressed with the authority of *Wetstein*, Bishop *Burnet* and others, Doctor *Doddridge* himself bringing up the rear.

Now what should you think of the cobbler, if he were to treat them all with the most supercilious disdain, and were to say, "What are all human authorities to me, " if they speak not agreeable to the divine " law and testimony? I no more mind " them, than I mind the *wisdom of Plato*, " *Aristotle, Cicero, &c. among the antients*; " *or of Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. Lock, Bishop* " *Warburton, or the old woman that sells ap-* " *ples at the corner of the street among the mo-* " *derns* [E]." Suppose again I were to press you with the authority of your favorite *Wetstein*, in order to degrade the divinity of the Son of God [F]. Would you call that authority

[E] *Theol.* vol. ii. conclusion.

[F] This laborious commentator (who was a *Swiss*, and was obliged to leave his own country on account of

authority conclusive? I am persuaded you would not compliment this learned man at the expence of *denying the Lord that bought you*. Suppose I were to produce the express testimony of a thousand learned and pious authors and commentators against Polygamy? What would be your reply? *They have followed one another like sheep.—They speak not agreeable to the divine law.—They set Moses and Christ at variance.—*But if only a single word or sentence can be gathered from any of them that at all favors our author's system; then no praises can be too lavish on their excellent judgment, prodigious piety, or profound learning. O *Thelyphthora, Thelyphthora*, thou mother of inconsistency, where shall I find thee?

Quo tenam cultus mutantem Protea nodo?

But it is no strange thing to hear men exclaim loudly against human authority, while they are assuming to themselves an

of his Arian principles,¹ has given us the various readings of the New Testament; but among them all, the word *αλληλικον* for *αμαρ* is not to be found; therefore this change of the word is intirely on his own judgment; but as it happens to coincide with the plan of our author, he adopts it with as much authority as if it were really part of the sacred text.

authority

authority little less than divine, and at the same time that they are professing to hold the opinions and decisions of all other men in the utmost contempt, are expecting that all other men should pay the most implicit obedience to their own.

It is also a practice more common than decent, for an author to talk of the absurdity of the pope's pretensions to infallibility, and at the very instant that he is doing so, to be putting on the *triple crown*, and thrusting his own *ipse dixit* into the papal chair. Hence it is that the most peremptory *dictators* are usually those who speak most against *dictating*: and whilst they will suffer no human authority, however respectable, to be quoted against them, where it does not coincide with their own sentiments, will yet catch at every thread of testimony they can lay hold on when it makes at all for their side the question.—How is it possible to argue on *fair* ground with such *unfair* players at *bo-peep*?—Produce a cloud of commentators; they are all despised as human authority: produce none, and you are despised yourself for not producing them.

With

With regard however to Bishop *Burnet*, I think I can give a tolerable good reason for his writing his little tract concerning Polygamy, though what he did was certainly a great blot in his character, if it were only on account of his duplicity.

When the friends of the Protestant interest saw that *Charles* the second was not likely to have any issue by the infant of *Portugal*, to whom he was married, and that therefore the crown was likely to descend to a popish successor, they began to put every engine at work that the King might have an heir, as *Burnet* himself tells us in *the history of his own time*, vol. i. p. 261. *fol. edit.* from whence I transcribe *verbatim* what follows :

“ When the party saw they could make
“ nothing of the business of the Duke of
“ Monmouth, they tried next by what
“ methods they could get rid of the
“ Queen ; that so the King might marry
“ another wife : For the King had chil-
“ dren by so many different creatures, that
“ they hoped for issue, if he had a wife
“ capable of any. Some thought, the
“ Queen and he were not legally married :
“ But the avowing a marriage, and the
“ living

“ living many years in that state, did cer-
“ tainly supply any defect in point of
“ form. Others pretended, she was bar-
“ ren from a natural cause, and that
“ seemed equivalent to impotence in men.
“ But the King often said, he was sure she
“ had once miscarried. This though not
“ overthrown by such an evidence, could
“ never be proved, unless the having no
“ children was to be concluded a barren-
“ ness : And the dissolving a marriage on
“ such an account could neither be justi-
“ fied in law nor conscience. Other sto-
“ ries were given out of the Queen’s per-
“ son, which were false : For I saw in a
“ letter under the King’s own hand that
“ the marriage was consummated. *Others*
“ *talked of Polygamy* : And officious per-
“ sons were ready to thrust themselves into
“ any thing that could contribute to their
“ advancement. Lord *Lauderdale* and
“ Sir *Robert Murray* asked my opinion of
“ these things. I said, I knew speculative
“ people could say a great deal in the way
“ of argument for *Polygamy*, and divorce :
“ Yet these things were so decried, that,
“ they were *rejected by all Christian so-*
“ *cieties.*”

How

How few men, even good men are there who can totally withstand corrupt influence and court favor! How easy is it to find arguments when we have a secret interest in wishing a thing to be true! Notwithstanding *Burnet* had pronounced Polygamy to be *rejected by all Christian Societies*, yet he afterwards himself stated the case which you have produced, and certainly gave his answer rather in favor of it; still however with great caution, and not without being constrained to own it as a *truth*, “that Polygamy falls short of the
“intendment of marriage in innocency, to
“which state, we that are under the gos-
“pel must return as near as it is possible.”

Upon the whole, Bishop *Burnet's* testimony amounts to little more than a question in casuistry [G], which he endeavors to solve in the most favorable manner he could to the prevailing court party; but after all does not pretend to speak decisively on the subject; and though it appears from the tract itself, which I have

[G] The question is this: Whether in *any case* Polygamy be *lawful* under the gospel?

How very different from the peremptory and absolute assertion of the author of *Thelyphthora*, that “*Polygamy is lawful in itself.*”

seen in the *British Museum* that he shewed it to Lord *Lauderdale*, who was then high in the King's favor, yet there is no proof at all that the Bishop made it public himself, or that it was ever printed by his own approbation.

But who could have expected that good *Doctor Doddridge* should ever have been called upon as a Coadjutor to Polygamy, in his note on *1 Tim. iii. 2.* where he first gives the sentiments of Mr. *Hallet* and Mr. *Whiston* on the text, and then mentions his own, by which he is so far from approving Polygamy, that he calls it an *irregular practice*, to which the *divine wisdom* had fixed a brand of infamy. However, if we have a mind to know exactly what was this excellent man's opinion of Polygamy, we have only to consult his paraphrase on *1 Cor. vii. &c.* where he has the following remarkable words :

“ As the God of nature has for certain
 “ wife reasons implanted in the sexes a
 “ mutual inclination to each other, in or-
 “ der to prevent Fornication, and every
 “ other species of uncleanness, *let every*
 “ *man have* and retain his own proper
 “ wife ; and *let every woman have* and re-
 “ tain

“tain her own husband : for neither divorce nor Polygamy, are by any means agreeable to the genius of the gospel.

“Again, The wife hath not power over her own body, but hath by the marriage covenant transferred it to the husband ; and in like manner also *the husband hath not power over his own body*, but it is as it were **THE PROPERTY OF HIS WIFE.**

In the *improvement* of this chapter *Doctor Doddridge* makes the following judicious observation :

“It becomes us humbly to adore the divine wisdom and goodness manifested in the formation of the first human pair, and in keeping up the different sexes through all succeeding ages, in so just a proportion, that every man might have his own wife, and every woman her own husband.

Methinks after these conclusive testimonies from *Doctor Doddridge*, my friend's attempt to prove him an abettor of Polygamy is something like that of the Irishman who said “he was iure there was a dead man in the ditch, for he heard him groan.”

Had the author of *Thelyphthora* been satisfied with the decision of this sound and learned protestant Divine on the text, we should not have found him stooping so very low as to ask instruction from the pope, or rather from a nest of Jesuits, by adopting the sense of the *Rhemish* testament on the passage before us, and then by way of mending the matter adding

—— *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*

When he might with much more propriety have exclaimed

Flectere si nequeo superos acheronta movebo.

But the cobbler cannot take leave of this important scripture without once more commencing critic; and as he is threatened with a future drubbing for his ignorance and blunders in the explanation of this chapter, he will e'en try his hand once more; that if the author of *Thelyphthora* has any more discipline to bestow upon him, he may give it him all at once.

Upon revising what I said in the *Blessings of Polygamy*, p. 61, 62, 63. I find I have omitted to take notice of a very glaring piece of partiality, which my friend has

has fallen into in his translation of that same word *עזבו* which has already occasioned so much altercation: for in the very same verse where it relates to the man, he renders it, Let him *retain* his wife. But where it relates to the woman he renders it, Let her *keep to* her husband. His reason for making this wide difference of sense in the very same word, and in the very same verse is very evident. But though neither of the expressions are so just as that which our translators have given us, yet I will readily leave it to your choice to take the word *retain* or *keep to* which ever you please. If you choose the first, and translate the one part of the verse, *Let the husband retain his wife*, then you must translate the other part, *Let the wife retain her husband*: And there's an end of Polygamy that way.

But if you had rather take the other expression, *Let the wife keep to her husband*, then you must also (as observed in *the Blessings of Polygamy*) render the latter clause *Let the husband keep to his wife*. In short choose which expression you will, only abide by it; but without the most shameful abuse of the word of God, you

C

cannot

cannot give a different sense to the repetition of the same word in the same verse.

But as my learned friend by his elucidation of this chapter leaves the matter open to the whole church of Corinth to practice Polygamy without any *limitation* or *restriction* whatever, we may suppose in order to make him consistent with himself, that he has found out by some anti-ent manuscript or tradition, that all the married women whose husbands were members of that church were either *barren*, or *lunatics*, or *scolds*.

The cobbler has nothing more to say in the way of criticism himself, but begs to apply to the learned author of *Thelyphthora* for information whether the text in *Mal. ii.* which our translators have rendered in the singular number “*thee and the wife of thy youth,*” be really so in the original ; or whether the words stand in the Hebrew as given us in *Thelyphthora*, *You and your WIVES?* I am sure if our translators have rendered the words in the singular number, when they ought to have been in the plural, they have shewn themselves to be very incorrect, though they have thereby made the text speak strongly in favor of monogamy :

gamy: but if your translation be the true one, then I confess there is an ambiguity in the phraseology; and that though *thou and thy wife* can mean only two persons or *they twain*, yet *you and your wives* leaves the matter so much at large, that it may take in one man with half a dozen wives. Your explicit answer to this question will really much oblige me, as I assure you I have asked no person but yourself, whether you or the translators of the Bible are right.

VII.

The author of *Theolyptera* totally misrepresents what the cobbler called "*the chicanery*." The expression alluded to was the following: "That if by a woman in the text (Matt. v. 28.) *any woman* be meant, then a man may commit adultery *by looking at his own wife*." This you have entirely passed over, and instead of it you affirm that I charge you with *chicanery*, for saying that the word adultery is never used but where the defilement of a married woman is concerned [F].

VIII.

[F] If this assertion contain sound divinity, then fornication as well as adultery is not forbidden by

VIII.

The author desires me to ask myself if I did not read his book with prejudice. "Did not your prejudices (says he) incline you to wish that they might rather be justified than removed?"—I answer sincerely, that notwithstanding the strong prepossessions I had in favor of the author, yet I *had* imbibed very strong prejudices against his performance before I read it. These prejudices I attribute in great measure to some letters I had read, which were written by one *Paul of Tarsus* on the other side of the question, and when I came to read your book, I really thought he was more than a match for you.

IX.

Though it seemed by our author's sentiments as contained in the two first volumes of *Thebelyphthora*, that no such thing as fornication could exist, yet he now tells us there is such an animal in the world as a whore, and gives us a most wonderful

the seventh commandment, and if not by that commandment, then by no other, and consequently can be no sin; for *where no law is, there is no transgression.*

account

account of this creature in the following words :

“ If this woman” (who has intercourse with one man and is therefore according to our author, the wife of that man by the divine law) “ departs from this *first* man “ to another, the bond with the first is “ totally vacated by her act of adultery; so “ that the first man is totally released from “ her. If afterwards she goes from man “ to man, and sells or gives her favors promiscuously to all alike, she is every “ body’s : no man can lay claim to her, “ or look upon her as his *property*, or be “ injured as a given appropriated husband “ might be, by her infidelity. She is in “ short, *nullius in ter bona*, and is a whore, “ harlot or prostitute, in the true sense of “ these words.”

From this very extraordinary definition it appears,

1st. That no unmarried woman (i. e. according to our author’s ideas of marriage) can be a whore.

2dly. That no woman whatever can commit whoredom till she has first committed adultery.

3dly. That she can be guilty of no whoredom till *three* men have had connection with her.

4thly. That as fornication is a less sin than adultery, consequently the third man who has intercourse with her is less guilty than the second.

5thly. That from the moment she has bestowed her favors on the third man, she ceases to be an adulteress.

6thly. That if an action be brought by the husband for *crim. con.* with any man but the second, it must be laid for committing *whoredom* with his wife, and not for committing *adultery*.

That these are conclusions necessarily deducible from our author's definition and premises is clear at first view: but without animadverting upon them, let me ask how agrees this doctrine with scripture? There we find, *Deut. xxii. 13, 14, &c. &c.* that if suspicion arose in the husband concerning his new married wife that she was not a maid, and if the *tokens of her virginity* could not be produced, she was adjudged to have *played the whore*. So by the Levitical law, *Lev. xxi. 7.* no priest was to *take a wife that was a whore*. By which

which it is evident that according to God's judgment, though not according to the judgment of the author of *Thehyphthora*, a woman might be a whore first and a wife afterwards. With him it is just *vice versa*.

Truly, my friend, you are very kind to propose to me the leaving off *tea*, that my ideas may not be *disturbed* by *trigittal dreams*; but such seems to be the confusion of your own ideas, that I would advise you to take an additional quantity of *coffee*, which I have heard is sometimes effectual towards dissipating the fumes of the imagination: Well indeed may you tell me that you are "perfectly convinced that I have scarcely one real idea of the book I write against," when the writer himself has scarcely one fixed idea of the subject he handles. And this perhaps is the true cause why you complain that your book is so generally misunderstood.

X.

The author of *Thehyphthora* seems to lay a great stress on the law of marrying the brother's wife: and where the surviving brother had no wife nor children of his own, there it was God's positive command that

that he should do so : but I no more believe that he ordained this as a general law where the next brother was already married, than I believe he commanded the widow and the wife to be married together. *Josephus's* testimony must in this case be conclusive, and the quotation which you yourself bring from him, *Antiq. lib. ix. chap. 5.* is full against you, for there he asserts that *Mablon's* kinsman refused to marry *Ruth*, saying, “*he had already a wife and children.*”——But our author adds, “*not a word that it was unlawful.*” But does not the very answer he returned imply this?—However, the author easily gets over the matter in his usual way, by affirming on the greatest of all authorities, *viz.* his own, that *Josephus does not represent the matter as the Bible does.* *Theol. vol. 1. p. 253.* However, if the author would establish his point, let him produce only one example of the next brother marrying the widow of the deceased brother, when he himself was a married man.—But I will go farther still.—Even supposing that in this particular instance God himself had commanded that the brother of the deceased, though a married man, should yet espouse

espouse the widow; still this would be no more proof that God approved of general Polygamy, than it would be that he approved of general incest, which marrying a brother's wife was deemed to be, and was forbidden as such under the Levitical law.

XI.

You are pleased to say you feel both hurt and ashamed at my strictures on the story of *Judah* and *Tamar*. Certainly the cobbler ought to be much obliged to you for this great sensibility on his behalf; but as he has taken the very words of the sacred text, and he thinks also the sense of it, he hopes you will make yourself quite easy on his account; especially as he does not find that any other person besides the author of *Thelyphthora* thinks he has given any wrong interpretation of the passage; not to mention that this author has expressed himself in such a manner on the place in question that few, if any, of his readers have been able to understand him.

XII.

I leave it to you and Doctor *Kennicot* to settle the matter about the word *not*.

XIII.

XIII.

That *Jael* acted as a faithful subject of the *Israelitish* state, I don't deny: but that she also acted under the immediate direction of God, is as clear as that the sun shines at noon-day. Read the fourth and fifth chapters of *Judges* throughout, also *Psalms* lxxxiii. 9. where the act of *Jael* to *Sisera* is spoken of as the direct act of God. It is true, this matter does not affect the present controversy either one way or other, but it is grievous to see the divine testimony so little regarded by one who certainly ought to have more respect for it.

XIV.

The cobbler is challenged to find as strong a prohibition of Polygamy, on the man's side, as that *Rom.* vii. 1, 2, 3. on the woman's side.

To bring that passage is meer trifling. It is plain that the apostle is there introducing the law as a husband, to whom we are all espoused by nature; and Christ as a husband, to whom all believers are espoused by grace: therefore the grand and only point he meant to prove was, that a believer had no more to do with an abrogated

gated law as a covenant of works, than a widow who was married again has to do with her first husband when he is dead and buried. If therefore St. Paul had in this place shewn that it was equally criminal in a man to have more wives than one, as it was in a woman to have more husbands than one (though the one were as much a truth as the other,) it would have been quite foreign to his own purpose. But when our blessed Saviour is confining himself wholly to the matters of adultery and divorce, there he expressly gives us to understand that it is equally criminal in the man to put away his wife and marry another, as it is in the wite to put away her husband and marry another. *He saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery,* Mark x. 11, 12.

XV.

The author of *Thelyphthora* again challenges the cobbler in a very peremptory manner, to produce one instance of the divine prohibition or disapprobation of Polygamy. And then

then tells us, (perhaps rather too much in a way of triumph) that if I do so, *I shall have the Old Testament on my side.*

The cobbler answers the challenge; *first*, by producing that remarkable text, *Deut. xvii. 17.* where God tells the *Israelites*, that when they were come into the land which he should give them, the king which he would choose for them *should not multiply wives unto himself, that his heart turn not away.*—Here is,

1st, Absolute *prohibition*; *he shall not multiply wives* or have *many wives*, which is the express meaning of the word Polygamy.

2dly, *Disapprobation*, and the reason of it, lest Polygamy, or the *multiplying wives*, should *turn away his heart from God.*

But that the interpretation of this important text of scripture may not rest on my own decision, I shall back it with a testimony, which, to an unprejudiced mind, must carry with it full conviction: and this shall be from a comment on the Bible, which was set forth (as ordered by the committee for religion) by a considerable number of those sound, learned, and evangelical divines which composed the Westminster Assembly, and before publication submitted

submitted to the perusal and correction of them all together, as is expressed in the preface to the work itself; and therefore must be regarded not as the judgment of a single individual, or of one commentator, but as conveying the sense of a large body of the greatest, ablest, and best men that perhaps ever composed any synod since the days of the apostles.

These faithful and orthodox divines thus express themselves on the text in question:

“ If kings may not [*i. e.* *multis uxoris*]
“ much less their subjects, since it is of
“ more moment that they have children
“ than inferior persons; and though the
“ patriarchs had more wives than one at
“ once, it was not according to the first
“ institution of marriage. [*See above, on*
“ *Gen. iv. 19.*] It was never allowed by
“ God, though for a time *tolerated*, upon
“ reasons which concern not our times.
“ And this might be rather *forbidden* to a
“ king, because of the power of his ex-
“ ample upon the manners of his people.”

Suffer me to bring one more text of scripture, which though quoted in the *Blessings of Polygamy*, is not of less weight on that account.—The passage alluded to,

is that *Lev. xviii. 18. Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, (or as it stands in the margin, one wife to another) to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time.*

I know you will not allow the marginal reading to be the true sense of the words, and may perhaps tell me, as you do upon another occasion, that “*I have not called in a single commentator, historian, or other author to my aid.*” However, I will now call in the corroborating testimony of one of the most judicious and unexceptionable men that ever lived in my behalf. Good old Mr. *Perkins*, who certainly shone among the brightest stars which adorned the church of *England* during the reign of *Queen Elizabeth*, and who for piety, learning, and deep skill in casuistry, was equalled by few, exceeded by none. This able and sound divine, treating on the text in question, thus writes,

“ This place is a flat prohibition of *the*
 “ *sin of Polygamy*: for to take a wife to
 “ her sister, in the *Hebrew* phrase, is no-
 “ thing else but to take two wives one to
 “ another. The like form of speech is used
 “ elsewhere by *Moses*, as *Exod. xxvi. 3.*

“ Five

“ Five curtains shall be coupled together
“ (the woman to her sister,) that is, one
“ to another; and the other five curtains
“ shall be coupled (the woman to her sister)
“ that is, the one to the other. *Exod.*
“ *i.* 9. The four beasts were joined with
“ their wings (the woman to her sister,)
“ that is, the one to the other. Again,
“ *Moses* himself there alledgeth two reasons
“ against Polygamy: the one is, because
“ the man is to love, cherish, and com-
“ fort his wife; whereas, if he should take
“ unto him another besides her, he should
“ greatly vex his first lawful wife. The
“ other, because by that means he should
“ uncover the shame of his wife; that is,
“ he should play a very dishonest part with
“ her, to whom he was before lawfully
“ married.” *Perkins on Christian Obedience*
or Household Government, vol. iii. p. 677.

The very same interpretation which Mr.
Perkins gives, do the Assembly of Divines
also give of this scripture in their comment
before quoted. The following are their
own words. “ This is not to be under-
“ stood only of another natural sister, as
“ if a man might have two wives, so they
“ were not such sisters, or two sisters one

“ after another to wife, the latter upon
 “ the death of the former, for the mar-
 “ riage of the brother's wife is forbidden
 “ before, *ver.* 16. and by consequence a
 “ woman must not marry her sister's hus-
 “ band, and so two sisters are already for-
 “ bidden to be married to one man.—
 “ Wherefore it is most probable, that this
 “ is a prohibition of Polygamy, *i. e.* of
 “ having more wives than one at once;
 “ that one may not be a vexation to the
 “ other, which is likely to fall out not
 “ only betwixt natural sisters, as *Leah* and
 “ *Rachel*, but betwixt those that are not
 “ of kin, as betwixt *Hannah* and *Penin-*
 “ *nah*. And for the word *sister* in a ge-
 “ neral acceptation, it may be applied to
 “ any woman, as the word *brother* to any
 “ man. *Gen.* xix. 7. And it is to be noted,
 “ that it is sometimes to be applied to
 “ things, which, in propriety of speech,
 “ come not under such a title or denomi-
 “ nation, as the wings of the beast, *Ezek.*
 “ i. 9. are said to touch *a woman to her*
 “ *sister*, as the Hebrew phrase carrieth it.”

Now what says my friend to these autho-
 rities? I dare say he will not scruple to af-
 firm that they are not worth minding. But

what if Mr. *Perkins* and the Assembly of Divines had spoken the language of *Thelyphthora*? Then what high encomiums would they have received! Truly, we may see that throughout life, *the traveller who blowed hot and cold with the same mouth*, is no uncommon character.

XVI.

The cobbler is accused of attacking his own old friend, and is put in mind of the apostle's advice, 1 *Tim.* iv. 11. *Study to be quiet.*

It is easy to give advice, hard to follow it ourselves. I grant however, that the above apostolic counsel may be more suited to the cobbler as a layman, than to the author of *Thelyphthora* as a minister; as that author must well remember a conversation some years ago between two certain clergymen, when the one told the other "he intended to leave off preaching and be quiet." "Ah, Sir, (answered the other) the devil loves quiet ministers."

As to attacking his friend, this charge the cobbler denies. It is true he attacked the errors of his friend, but the person of his friend he endeavored to treat with re-

spect, love, and regard. He wishes the author of *Tbelyphthora* had observed the same rule.

XVII.

The author of *Tbelyphthora* accuses the cobbler of setting forth “the fair sex in such a light of vengeance and assassination, and in short, as such a set of furies, as to outdo, if possible, the three famed daughters of *Acheron* and *Nox*.” He then advises the cobbler “to put some snakes into their hair in the next edition, and then they may pass for the lineal descendants of *Alesto*, *Megæra*, and *Tisiphone*.” He then adds, “I marvel not that my friend has still to complain with *Horace*.

“*Martiis cælebs quid agam calendis?*”

Ah! my good friend, 'tis too late to offer the ladies *sugar-plums*, when you have been pelting them with *bailstones* and *coals of fire*; and placing them in a light little superior to slaves in a *Turkish seraglio*. But the cobbler has no cause to dread their displeasure for any thing that he has said, concerning the tenderness and delicacy of their feelings in his late piece, or of the effects.

effects of that universal jealousy which the doctrine contained in *Thehyphthira* will certainly spread among them. The injured sex cannot yet have forgotten—but, *non est alta mente repositum*—a certain note concerning *queen Vajite*, which most of them have adjudged far more proper to have come from an *eastern bawler* than a *Christian divine*. However, the cobbler has still too much regard for his *old friend*, notwithstanding his severe personal reflection, couched under the line from *Hercules*—either to lend the females his *prop*, or to *put snakes into their heads*; being certain that the first object of their vengeance would be the devoted author of *Thehyphthira*. But if that author has a mind to view some of the *blessed effects* of his own system when established by law, let him look at the windows of our picture-shops, and there he will be entertained with a print of two women belaboring a poor hen-pecked man, and under it, as nearly as I can recollect, the following words: *Polygamy in perfection, or Doctor Madman brought to the right use of his senses.*

But if the author of *Thehyphthira* has any meaning at all in bringing the above line

from *Horace*, (the introduction of which is deemed, even by his best friends, to be a masterpiece of insolence and rudeness,) it must be the following—"Mr. *Hill* has used "the female sex so ill, that no wonder "none of them will marry him."—But as it is true on the one side, that

*There swims no goose so grey, but soon or late,
Can find some honest gander for her mate,*

So it is equally true on the other, that

There is no Jack but may have his Gill;

In proof of which I should be very unwilling to produce the author of *Thelyphthora*. However, I had much rather be lamenting with *Horace*—

"Martius cælebs quid agam calendis,"

Than to be joining the cry of every old lecher and battered rake in the kingdom, upon the prospect of Polygamy being established by law,

O mihi preteritos referet si Jupiter annos!

I am sure if I had no higher estimation of the marriage state than what I could form upon reading *Thelyphthora*, I had much rather continue a batchelor all my life, than

than harbor a thought of entering into it. But so far am I from thinking that any thing I have advanced in the *Principles of Polygamy* may be the means of incurring the disapprobation of the sex, that I am flattering myself that however much reason I may have had to *lament* my having hitherto lived single, yet (though not quite in the prime of life) I may now and a favorable reception from some kind and amiable help meet. But happy indeed may the author of *Theophilanthropos* esteem himself that he made the marriage-knot sure before he acquainted the world with his ideas of Polygamy, otherwise I think the poet's lamentation for the *calends* of *March* must have been his all his life long [G].

I have only to add, that if my friend wants a motto for his next publication, instead of going to *St. Paul* for it, I would advise him to have recourse to the *celestial brilliancy* of DOCTOR GRAHAM *himself*, and to take the conspicuous words

[G] Even this line of *Hæcæ* shews, that the heathen nations supposed that some external form was necessary before marriage, otherwise this lascivious poet would hardly have styled himself *cæcus*, a bachelor, as it is to be feared he had been frequently *married*, according to the *Theophilanthropos* system.

which are painted on the outside of his house in *Pall-Mall*,

“ SACRED TO HYMEN.”

Especially as the electrical, hymeneal beds, on which the doctor advertises to *touch so delicately*, may prove very convenient for the accommodation of an additional wife now and then : For as to the ladies living together under the same roof, I think it must be quite given up, since we can hardly suppose there would subsist a sufficient degree of harmony between them, even to put them on a footing with *Bayes's* two kings of *Brentford*, who came in *smelling at the same nossegay* [H].

I must here beg leave to observe, that *Doctor Graham* as well as the author of a *Treatise on Female Ruin*, complains that the design of his *celestial bed* is much *misunderstood* through *ignorance* and *prejudice*, and assures the public, in the exact language of *Thelyphthora*, that this same electrical *torus* is by no means intended to be used in an *unlimited indiscriminate* manner, but is re-

[H] Preface to the third vol. of *Theol.* p. 8. note,
served

served " ONLY FOR MARRIED PERSONS," that he has nothing in view but to promote the public good, to prevent *impurity, adultery, and divorce*, and to encourage *population* in many *noble and illustrious families*, which are now without heirs to inherit their titles and estates, and therefore he assures himself of the *patronage and approbation* of the great, the *learned*, and THE GOOD; and hopes for that *benevolence and encouragement* from THE LEGISLATURE which the *real importance of the object merits.*" —The Doctor then adds the following *nota bene*.

✂ IN order to deter the wantonly lascivious, the mere votaries of pleasure from polluting the TEMPLE OF HYMEN, the following lines are written in golden capitals over the grand entrance.

ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΑΚΑΘΑΡΤΟΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ!

Procul! O Procul este profani. VIRG.

Keep afar off ye profane ones!

See *Doctor Graham's Abstract*, &c. given at the door to such as attend his electrical experiments, and compare it with *Telephora*.

But

But notwithstanding the grave *procul este profani* of the *medico-electrical Doctor* and the pious admonitions of the author of *The-lyphtkora* to a *holy and sober use* of Polygamy, and to avoid an *excess* of it ; notwithstanding the joint assurances of these two adventurous personages that their highly extolled nostrums of *Polygamy* and *hymeneal electricity* are only meant to promote the welfare of the community in general, as well as the happiness of private families in particular, to put a stop to divorce, adultery, &c. and to encourage population, by furnishing heirs to titles and estates ;—yet, certain curious persons who regard not the apostles advice, of being *quiet and minding their own business*, but must needs take a peep *behind the curtain*, have been hardy enough to try to persuade the world that other ends of a very different nature are likely to be answered by the systems delivered to the world both by the one and the other of these learned gentlemen.

TO CONCLUDE:

I am told by the author of *Thelyphthora*, that “*forbearance is no acquittance*,” (great *forbearance* truly,) and that the light in which he shall find himself obliged, in justice to the public (to say nothing of *Thelyphthora*;) to place me as a *critic* and a *philologist*, will hardly be more disagreeable to myself than to the *author*. Then he adds, “but *let it remain so*, Sir, (a conviction already drawn up in the law phrase,) [I]

[I] We may suppose the words of the declaration to run as follows:

County of } BE IT REMEMBERED, that in the
 s—y. } *twentieth* year of the said year, and in
 Town } the twenty-fifth year of the said year, His
 sovereign majesty lord George, King of Great-Britain,
 France, and Ireland, King of the said Kingdoms, and to
 forth, *Richard Hill*, of *Hampshire*, in the County of *Sar-*
top, *baronet*, otherwise known by the name of *de*
me, *Martinus Scillerus*, Esquire, one of his majesty’s ju-
 stices assigned to keep the peace within the said County, of
 divers crimes and misdemeanors, in the *art of printing*, and
philology, by the said *Richard Hill*, otherwise the said, or,
 not being duly qualified nor licensed by the laws of
Thelyphthora to exercise the art or mystery of *printing*, or
philology aforesaid. I therefore in due justice, upon
 due consideration had of the premises, do declare that
 the said *Richard Hill*, otherwise the said, hath in-
 curred the penalty of *printing*, which said
 penalty, I the within named justice shall inflict on
 the said delinquent by my own hand and seal, within
 the space of three months next ensuing from the date
 hereof. Given under my hand and seal, the day and
 year aforesaid, MARTINUS SCILLERUS.

that

that happen what may, you have nobody to thank but yourself." In short, the cobbler has lamed the author's *hobby horse*, and has sent him limping and wincing away, and therefore in return he is resolved that the *hobby horse* shall kick the cobbler's *brains out*. But, *parce minis, magne sacerdos*. Please to recollect, that to *forbear threatening*, is an apostolic injunction. Let me also put you in mind, that though the cobbler in this piece has administered a little moderate correction by *leathering*, yet the *awl*, the *hammer*, the *pinchers*, and the *paring-knife*, have not yet been taken up in his defence; and these are dangerous weapons to fall under.

Though the cobbler would wish to maintain the spirit of a *Christian*, yet he is not exempt from the feelings of a *man*: therefore, though he will not say

Nemo me impune lacessit,

Yet he begs leave to let you know that there are a few lines in the satires of *Horace* which, upon some occasions, may be more applicable to him than he himself would wish in his cooler moments.

— Ut pereat rubigine telum

Nec quisquam noceat, cupido mihi pacis, at ille
Qui me commorit, melius non tangere clamo
Flebit, &c. &c.

Peace is my dear delight, not *Fleury's* more,
Yet touch me and no minister so sore. POPE.

But after all I am fully persuaded that, as two separate individuals, this controversy is not likely to do either you or me any good in a spiritual way, though I esteemed it absolute matter of duty in me, to enter my protest against the unscriptural doctrine and dangerous tendency of *Thelyphibera*. Having done this in two publications, I shall be happy to say with regard to all controversy,

Hic castus arteaque refeno,

But whether I am to add the other word (*vicior*) or to turn it into *castus*, I must leave others to determine. One thing however is certain, that every day our pens are exercised in *vain janglings* and *disputings*, we have reason to lament with one of old, when a day passed over his head without his having done any good, "*Perdidimus diem.*" God grant we may neither of us have cause to cry out with another

"*Hec! vitam perdidisti operose nihil agendo.*"

Or

Or with a third great man of modern memory, who had just strength enough to say at the last gasp, "*The battle is fought, but the victory is lost for ever.*"

N. B. The cobbler finds some queries prefixed to the second edition of *Thelyphthora*; but as many of them consist in *begging* the question, as others of them are *beside* the question, and as the objections contained in most of them are considered and answered in the *Blessings of Polygamy*, therefore the cobbler will not animadvert on them particularly.—Besides, it is rumored about that these queries were *borrowed* by the author of *Thelyphthora*.

Postscript.

Postscript.

SINCE I wrote the foregoing letter I have looked again into your Preface to the third volume, where I find an extract of a letter from a *reverend and learned correspondent* of yours in favor of it. You have not indeed told us by whom the letter itself was written, but as I really believe there is only one reverend and learned Divine in all England (and I do allow him to be a truly upright and valuable man,) who *now* approves your book, though several others were at first staggered by its plausibility, I could venture to name the person without mistake, as certainly as I could have determined who was meant by the author of *Thelyphthora* though his Treatise were anonymous. However if epistolary testimonies must be admitted on the one side, they certainly may on the other:

other : And as I dare say you will think I cannot follow a better example than your own, permit me to cite a few passages from some letters which I have now in my pocket on the subject. The first shall be an extract from one minister to another, with a sight of which I have lately been favored.

“ I hope you are going on with zeal,
 “ comfort and success in the blessed work
 “ of an evangelist—make full proof of
 “ your ministry—the days are evil, the
 “ love of many is waxed cold—some have
 “ brought in damnable errors—others
 “ turn the grace of God into lascivious-
 “ ness, and some have discovered the *ad-*
 “ *vantage* and *privilege* of Polygamy in the
 “ *new Testament !!!*

“ The reasoning, sophistry, chicanery,
 “ fallacy and poison of that book at first
 “ appear plausible and insinuating, but
 “ the charm presently vanishes, the purity
 “ of the gospel shines through every at-
 “ tempt to fully its brightness—and we
 “ discover the cloven foot of this angel of
 “ light—and as a discerning minister ex-
 “ pressed it, pronounce the book to be
 “ *Satan's plea, for a libidinous appetite.*”

The

The second shall be from a joint friend of your's and mine, a gentleman of known learning and true religion, which I only received last night.

“ We have perused with great pleasure
“ The Blessings of Polygamy,” thinking
“ the arguments conclusive, and admiring
“ the spirit in which it is written. To
“ tell you the truth the only fault we find
“ with it is that we think you are too la-
“ vish in your encomiums upon the au-
“ thor of *Thelyphthora*. And we are
“ sorry to see that they have so little effect,
“ by observing that he advertises a 3d vol.
“ with a letter to you. I shall be curious
“ to see what he has to say in reply.”

The third shall be from a very worthy and learned friend of mine, who I hope will pardon the liberty I take in printing his letter (never designed for public view) without his knowledge; but as I am indebted to him for that judicious quotation from *Wall's History of Infant Baptism*, which is contained in it, I think it much more honest to tell the world from whence I had it, than to let them suppose, I had collected it in the course of my own reading.

“ DEAR

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I should have acknowledged the receipt
 “ of *The Blessings of Polygamy displayed* sooner;
 “ but I was informed that you was gone
 “ out of town; and I did not hear of your
 “ return till Wednesday last. I have read
 “ it with great satisfaction; and, as an in-
 “ dividual, have reason to say, that God
 “ has made this unhappy controversy about
 “ Polygamy (like some others) a means of
 “ information and settlement to my mind.
 “ Long before I heard of Mr. M——’s book
 “ I had been puzzled as to this point; and
 “ the reading of *Thelyphthora* almost per-
 “ suaded me to embrace the unchristian doc-
 “ trine. However, at present I am satisfied
 “ that, as a doctrine, it is inconsistent with
 “ the New Testament; and, when practised,
 “ full of the most dreadful consequences.
 “ For my satisfaction in this important mat-
 “ ter, I am indebted to many, but especially
 “ to you, Sir, as an author, and to my dear
 “ friend Mr. N— as a bosom companion.

“ I have not read much of Mr. M——’s
 “ reply to your address, but, from what I
 “ did read, am sorry to see him so much
 “ and so unjustly out of temper with you.
 “ As to his threatening to expose you as a
 “ critic,

“ critic, (so far as I am capable of judging)

“ you have no cause to fear him.

“ Should you send out another edition,
 “ the following quotation may perhaps
 “ strengthen what you say at p. 66, 67.

“ I esteem it very material to observe by
 “ the bye this emphasis of the word *ἀνδρῶν*
 “ for apprehending the force of a text of
 “ St. Paul against the Polygamists. These
 “ men presume to say, that there is no
 “ prohibition in the New Testament of
 “ the plurality of wives to a man. St.
 “ Paul 1 Cor. vii. 1, 2. permitte people,
 “ if they can be so content, to abstain from
 “ continence; but if they cannot, let al-
 “ lows marriage: but with this limitation

“ *ἕκαστος τῶν ἑαυτοῦ γυναικῶν ἕξει, καὶ ἑαυτὸν τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ*
 “ *ἀνδρὸς ἕξει.* The true translation of

“ which words is, *Let every man have his*
 “ *own wife, and let every woman have a hus-*
 “ *band peculiar to her.*—For as when *Arist-*
 “ *otle* says *ἀνδρῶν τὰ τοῦ ἀνδρῶν*: It were a
 “ very impertent rendering to translate it;
 “ *men have this of their own*: which ought
 “ to be, *this is proper, or peculiar, to men.*

“ And where he says, *οἱ δὲ Βατραχοὶ ἑαυτῶν ἕξει*
 “ *τῶν γυναικῶν*; to say, *Frogs make their own*

“ noise, would not reach the sense : which
 “ is, that *Frogs make a noise peculiar to*
 “ *themselves.* So it is an imperfect transf-
 “ lation of the foresaid words of the apo-
 “ stle, which our English gives, *Let every*
 “ *woman have her own husband.* The word
 “ signifies, *one peculiar to her.*”

That the Lord Jesus may keep you, and
 cause you to shine more and more unto
 the perfect day is the sincere desire of

Dear SIR,

Your very affectionate friend,

And obliged humble servant,

* * *

P. S. The proper force of the word *ιδιος*,
 as opposed to *κοινος*, may also be seen, Acts
 iv. 32. και εδεις τι των υπαρχουτων αυτω ελεγεν ιδιον
 ειναι, αλλ' ην αυτοις απαντα κοινα.

I conclude the whole of these epistolary
 testimonies (though I could produce a
 great many more) with one which con-
 tains a practical comment on our author's
 doctrine. I have transcribed it from a
 letter written by a laborious minister of
 the

the Church of England to another clergyman, who lately inclosed it to me. Speaking of the pernicious effects of *Thehyphthora* in various places, he goes on as follows :

“ There was an instance of this, a few
“ weeks ago, at L———l. A man amongst
“ the Independents there, who had a wife
“ and five children, upon the strength of
“ Mr. ——’s authority, prevailed upon a
“ widow (who kept a public house, and
“ had also five children by her late husband) to believe that Polygamy was lawful. She was weak enough to receive
“ him, his wife and five children into her
“ house; his wife was foolish enough to
“ go with him: they lived for a time apparently comfortably together; the women sat on each side him at table, and
“ when customers came in they served
“ them by turns. The widow (as might
“ be expected) proved with child, and
“ when her friends attempted to part them,
“ and argued with the man upon the
“ wickedness of his conduct (with Mr.
“ ——’s book in his hand,) he defended
“ himself against all they could say. Thus
“ you see “ *The Blessings of Polygamy* begin
“ to

“ to be *displayed*, but what must the au-
 “ thor of such an abominable perform-
 “ ance think of himself, when such con-
 “ sequences ensue?”

I imagine that, by this time, the author of *Thelyphthora* has seen as many extracts from letters as he wishes to read, and am also afraid that my *Supplement* to the “*Blessings of Polygamy*” will, if I add any more, be like the *Supplement* to *Chambers's Dictionary*, more bulky than the work itself; I therefore beg to subscribe myself,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Still your sincere friend,

And well-wisher,

The COBLER.

F I N I S.

The following Extract of a Letter having been received since the whole of my *Pantheist* was printed off, and struck up, I am obliged to place it where it stands.

MY DEAR SIR,

“ I Have just finished the reading of Mr.
“ M——’s *third* volume on his favorite
“ topic. His letter to you, Sir, which concludes
“ this dull, tedious compilation from popish
“ councils, synods, fathers, &c. gave me not a
“ little concern; not upon your account, but his.
“ The very respectful and friendly style with
“ which you acceded him through your whole
“ book, when compared with the unceremonious,
“ pert, and sneering dial of which disgraces his
“ performance, must exhibit a contrast very
“ much to Mr. M’s disadvantage, in the eye of
“ every man of candor and good breeding. In-
“ deed, Sir, I feared, upon the first perusal of
“ your book, that you had rather exceeded in
“ the declarations of your friendship and respect
“ for this reverend Polygamist; and the event
“ hath at least proved, that Mr. M. was unpre-
“ pared for *such* an address. His reflections, in
“ some parts, are grossly *personal*, both when he
“ speaks in plain English, and when he wraps
“ up the obnoxious sentiment in learned scraps,
“ (*patches*, Horace would call them) of Latin.
“ Some of his *notes* are puerile and nugatory to
“ the last degree, and carry with them such an
“ appearance of consummate pedantry, as must
“ disgust every reader of true literary taste.
“ And I must declare, that his letter through-
“ out is void of that liberality, to which he
“ *E “ seems

“ seems to lay so much claim. As for his criticisms, upon some parts of your book, the school-boy, *qui uno partam colit asse Minervam*, ought to be ashamed of them. And as for his mode of handling your arguments, it is executed with such a cautious hand, as if the wary casuist feared they would burn his fingers. But, it seems, Sir, your “learned friend,” not content with the elaborate strictures he has already made upon your piece, intends something still more formidable and severe against you, in the light of a *philologist*. I am sorry to say, this intimation carries with it something extremely unamiable. Mr. M. affects philological knowledge; but he descends so low sometimes, that his critiques are only worthy of the

“ Tribes of word-catchers that live on syllables.”

“ However, he should cease his triumphing as a philologist, till he has answered the Monthly Reviewers. For, in the opinion of many, equal in classical knowledge to Mr. M. these able casuists have refuted every argument which he hath founded upon biblical criticism; and they have challenged him to a fair combat. He may *affect* to treat their strictures with sovereign contempt: but under that lies concealed a dread to take up the gauntlet; of which they seem so justly convinced, that they declare publicly they “look upon him as yielding them the palm.”

“ I remain, dear Sir,

“ Your most obliged friend,

“ And obedient servant.”

May 23, 1781.

T H E

U N L A W F U L N E S S

• •

P O L Y G A M Y

E V I N C E D.

[Price, One Shilling and Sixpence.]



T H E

U N L A W F U L N E S S

• •

P O L Y G A M Y

E V I N C E D :

O R,

O B S E R V A T I O N S

C O M P O S E D B Y T H E

E R R O N E O U S I N T E R P R E T A T I O N S

O F T H E P A R T S O F T H E

N E W T E S T A M E N T,

R E S P E C T I N G T H E

L A W S O F M A R R I A G E,

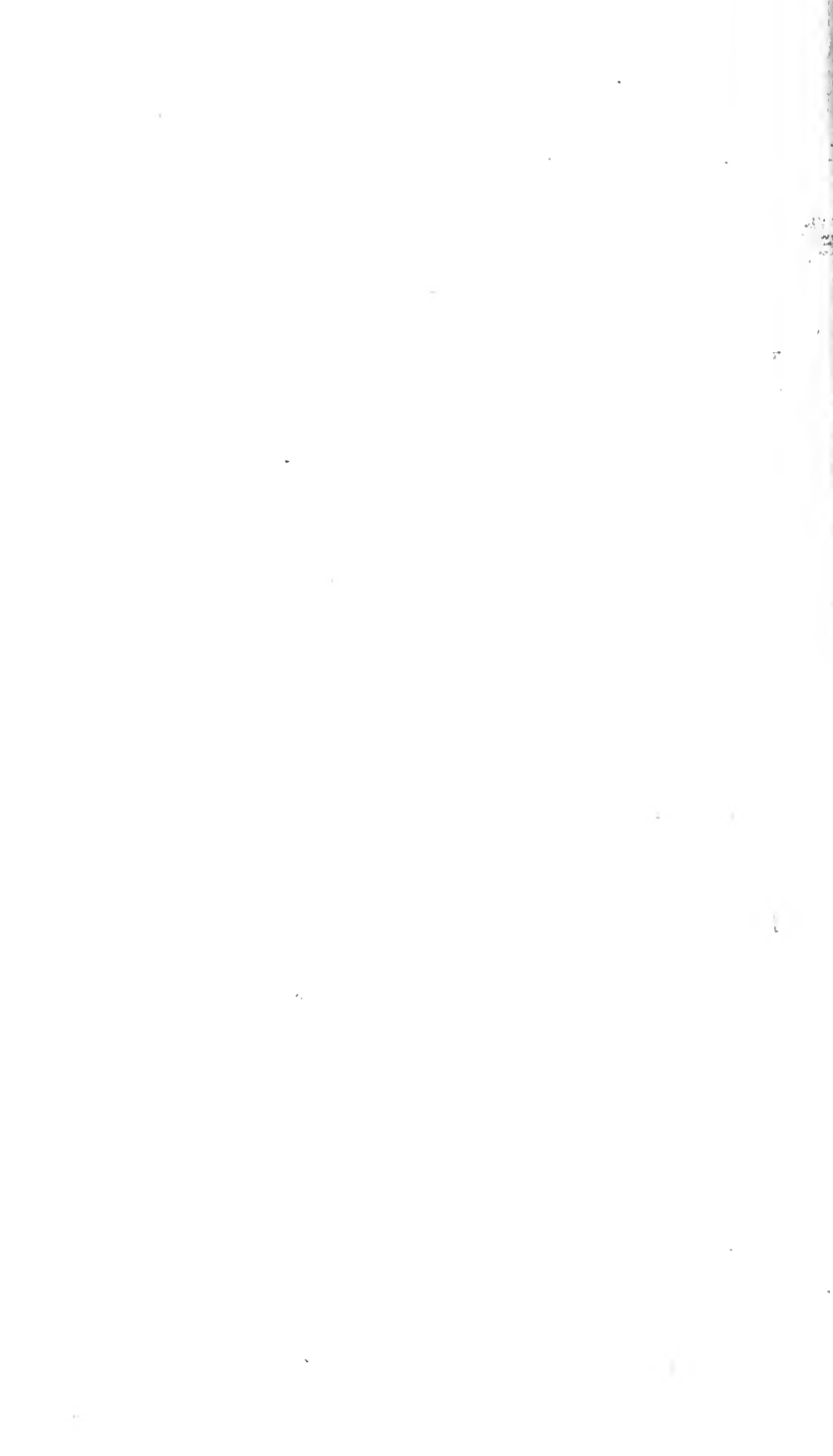
lately published in a Treatise on

F E M A L E R U I N.

L O N D O N .

Printed for G. KEARSLEY, Fleet-street,

M.DCC.LXXV.



T O

T H E R E A D E R.

THE following Observations are offered from Motives of sincere Regard for the present and future Happiness of Mankind. They are designed to remind you of the true Meaning of the Passages of the New Testament respecting the Laws of Marriage, and to obviate the erroneous Interpretations of them lately published in the Treatise on Female Ruin. A Treatise which the Author of these Observations hath been induced to consider, not from any Apprehensions of the Influence of it upon the sincere Christian acquainted with the Sense of the sacred Writings, but from a View of the Illusion, and Encouragement that may result from it to the Uninformed, the Prejudiced, and Vicious.

Persons

Persons of this Description will ever be disposed to credit Suggestions that favour their Conduct, and would gladly intrench themselves under the Sanction and Authority of a Preacher of the Gospel, in the present Case, however averse they may be from attending to his Instructions in other Instances.

That the following Observations may conduce to the Promotion of the Purposes for which they are offered, is the Object of the sincerest Wishes of your, &c.

H. W.

LONDON,
O^ct. 3, 1780.

THE
UNLAWFULNESS

OF
POLYGAMY
EVIDENCED.

THE Author of *Thelyphthora* having asserted that Polygamy 'allowed by the Law of Moses, is not prohibited by the Gospel,' and that it was impossible that our blessed Lord, who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it, should condemn Polygamy as Adultery, we shall only consider and obviate this Writer's erroneous Interpretations of the Passages of the New Testament respecting those Points.

For if these Passages of the New Testament are found to afford no Foundation for our Author's Positions, he must appear to have been
but

but erecting a Castle in the Air, and, after all the Expence of Labour he hath incurred, his mighty and elaborate Superstructure must fall to the Ground. Most certainly, nothing less than the Authority of Revelation can determine on the Points here treated; the sacred Writings are our only certain Rule of Faith and Conduct, and to no Truths should we more readily subscribe than to these asserted by those early Writers of the Church, who, notwithstanding their Errors are acknowledged, by one, who was as little partial to them as our Author, to have been ‘the chief Ornaments of the Ages in which they lived;’ “that we are not to attend to human Assertions, but to establish our Questions by the Scriptures, which are our most certain, *μαλλουδι μονη αποδειξις*, or rather our only Demonstration of the Truth of them; and that *Δει παν ρημα η ωραγμα πισουσαι τη μηρτυρια της θεοπνευστα γραφης*: every Assertion and Action, or every Thing that is said or done, ought to be confirmed by the Evidence of the divinely-inspired Writings.”—*Clemens Alex. Strom. Basil Ethu.*

Let us proceed to the Consideration of the Passages of the New Testament erroneously interpreted

terpreted by our Author. The Author of Thelyphthora asserts that our blessed Lord's Discourses, in the Beginning of the nineteenth Chapter of St. Matthew, and of the tenth of St. Mark, as well as in other Parts of the New Testament, concerning the Laws of Marriage, relate only to Divorce, yet must we affirm that they also condemn Polygamy; and that Polygamy allowed by the Law, is therefore forbidden under the Gospel. The Truth of these Positions, must evidently appear to all who impartially review those Passages.

‘ The Pharisees came to our Lord tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a Man to put away his Wife for every Cause? And he answered, and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he who made them at the Beginning, made them Male, and Female? As though he had said, have ye not read, in the Mosaic Account of the Creation, that God, from the Beginning of it, when he certainly constituted human Nature in a Way most conducive to your Happiness, in creating your first Parents, made them Male and Female, or one Man, and one Woman, which would neither allow of Divorce or Polygamy? ‘ And said, for

B this

this Cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and shall adhere to his Wife, and they two shall be one Flesh; wherefore they are no longer two, but one Flesh; what therefore God hath joined together, saith he, under the Dispensation of the Gospel, let not Man separate, or put asunder.' Let the Bond of Matrimony be esteemed such as nothing can dissolve, except what can make them cease to be one Flesh by rendering the Person of one, common to some third Person. They are not to be separated unless they have rendered themselves one Flesh with some other.

' They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a Writing of Divorcement, and to dismiss or put her away? He saith unto them, Moses, because of the Hardness of your Hearts, suffered you to put away your Wives; but from the Beginning it was not so; and I, who appear to reduce this Institution to its original Perfection, say unto you, that, under the Dispensation of the Gospel, ' Whosoever shall put away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and shall marry another, committeth Adultery; and who so marrieth her that is put away, committeth Adultery.' The same Truths our Lord
also

also asserts in the fifth of St. Matthew and sixteenth of St. Luke: in the former, explaining the Law, he saith, that 'whosoever shall put away his Wife, saving for the Cause of Fornication, causeth her to commit Adultery;' and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth Adultery; in the latter, our Lord, asserting the Law in its utmost Extent, and Spirituality, affirms, that such unjust Dissolution of a Wife, and marrying another, were contrary to the original Design of Marriage and Adultery; for, 'whosoever, putteth away his Wife and marieth another, saith he, committeth Adultery: and whosoever marieth her that is put away from her Husband, committeth Adultery.'

Upon our Lord having made such express Declaration, St. Matthew relates that his Disciples say unto him, if the Case of a Man be so with his Wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, all Men cannot receive this Saying, save they to whom it is given.

With this Relation of St. Matthew, respecting the Points before us, let us review that of St. Mark. The Pharisees, saith this Evangelist,

gelist, came to our Lord, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his Wife? tempting him, conceiving that his Reply might administer some Pretence for Censure. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a Bill of Divorcement, and to put her away: And Jesus answered, and said unto them, for the Hardness of your Heart, which prevented your perceiving and adhering to the first Institution and original Design of Matrimony, he wrote you this Precept. But from the Beginning of the Creation, God would have it otherwise, for he made them Male and Female. For this Cause shall a Man leave his Father and Mother, and adhere to his Wife; and they twain shall be one Flesh; so then they are no more twain, or two, but one Flesh: What, therefore, God hath thus joined together, let no Man, under the Dispensation of the Gospel, pretend to put asunder. And, when in the House, his Disciples asked him again of the same Matter: And he saith to them, that according to the original Design of Marriage, 'Whosoever shall put away his Wife, and marry another, committeth Adultery against her,' she, by the primitive Institution
of

of the conjugal Union being still his Wife, and having the sole Right to his Person; ' And if a Woman shall put away her Husband, and be married to another, she committeth Adultery.'

From the preceding Passages nothing can be more evident to an impartial Reader, than that our blessed Lord was speaking of the primitive Institution of Marriage; that he would have his Disciples act according to the original Design of it; that he hath reduced the Law of Marriage to that primitive Institution which would not admit of Divorce or Polygamy, that Man and Wife are by personal Union one Flesh, and cannot be separated except for personal Intercourse with some other, that who so ever shall put away his Wife and marry another, except for Fornication, committeth Adultery against her; and if a Woman shall put away her Husband, and be married to another, she committeth Adultery, the Husband and Wife having by the original Institution of Marriage the sole Right to each other's Person: that not only the Husband hath the sole Right to the Person of his Wife, but that she also hath the sole Right to the Person of her Husband: according to St. Paul's express Commands, where he saith to
 avoid

avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife, and every Woman her own Husband.—
 “ Let the Husband render unto the Wife due Benevolence, and likewise the Wife unto the Husband. The Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Husband; and likewise the Husband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife:” their Engagements being reciprocal, they are in Conscience obliged to continue appropriate to each other.

With respect to the Remark of the Author of Thelyphthora, upon the Difference of Expression in the original Words, *εαυτέ γυναικα* and *τον ιδιου ανδρα*, which might be rendered, Let every Man have his own Wife, and every Woman her own proper Husband.—The Difference may as well denote such an Appropriation of the Husband to the Wife, that he have no personal Intercourse with any other Woman, as that she should not have personal Intercourse with any other Man; and nothing can be more evident than the Unlawfulness of Polygamy from these Passages of St. Paul. For, if the Husband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife, he, certainly, cannot transfer that Power by marrying another. We may also here add, that however the Au-
 thor

thor of Thelyphthora may conceive that Doctor Whitby's Prejudices have warred against his Judgment, in his Note upon the 10th Chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, and that he hath there found out "a *plain* Argument against Things not mentioned or even hinted at in the Text," we must beg Leave to observe, that that learned Commentator by no Means appears to have erred respecting the Intention and Meaning of our Lord in that Chapter, and that really Judgment, and not Prejudice, dictated the Comment.

That learned Writer, in the Words immediately preceding, and which are a Part of the Note that the Author of Thelyphthora hath quoted, saith, that from our Lord's Declaration, that he who putteth away his Wife and marrieth another, committeth Adultery against her, it clearly follows, "that he who not having put her away marries another, must be guilty of the same Crime, seeing he must have the same Power to marry another when the first is put away, as when she is not put away." And then follows the rest of the Note. What can more clearly refer to not only the Unlawfulness of Divorce, but also of Polygamy, and more evidently

dently condemn Polygamy as Adultery, than such an exprefs Declaration, that whofoever difmiffeth his Wife and marieth another, committeth Adultery againft her?—And what can be more evident from the preceding Relations of the Evangelifts, and Declarations of the Apoftle, than the Obligations of Husband and Wife to continue entirely appropriate to each other, and that our bleffed Lord in his Reply to the Pharifees, referred to the original Defign of the conjugal Union, and hath reduced the Laws of it to the primitive Inftitution of Matrimony?

With refpect to the Beginning of the firft Chapter of Deuteronomy, be it tranflated imperatively, or as our Author defires, hypothetically, yet, have we our Saviour's Authority to affert that, “for the Hardnefs of their Hearts Mofes wrote them the Precept concerning Divorce, and fuffered them to difmifs their Wives, but from the *Beginning* it was not fo.”

Mofes, not as a Politician, as our Author would fuggelt, but as a Lawgiver, as God's Minifter permitted Divorce. This was a divine
 Permiſſion,

Permission, and therefore the Deity dispensed with his own Institution.

The Jews were permitted to dismiss their Wives, for some Matter of Uncleanness. This Cause of Divorce was certainly something less than Fornication, because our Lord condemns it as an unjust Cause of Dissolution, and yet permits Divorce in case of Fornication. Perhaps this Cause was neither what the Schools of Hillel nor Shammai adopted; and as our Lord allows Divorce in case of Adultery, and Adultery was punished with Death, the Cause of Divorce permitted under the Old Testament, must have been something between their Interpretations. Be it however what it may, it was permitted, and Civil only faith that under the Dispensation of the Gospel it should not obtain, but that Christians must act according to the Law respecting it, who hath reduced it only to its primitive Institution.

With relation to the Old Testament, our Lord here hath certainly prescribed a new Law, which had not before obtained among the Jews. Divorces under the Old Testament were permitted for less Causes than Fornication; but

our Saviour under the Gospel will not permit them, except in that Case. The Answer of Christ to the Pharisees respecting Divorce was, as our Author allows, ‘grounded on the old Marriage Institution;’ and this, with relation to the Law, is certainly a *new* Dispensation.

Our Author, endeavouring to evade the Force of the twenty-eighth Verse of the fifth Chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel, affirms, that the Word Woman in the Original must mean such a Woman as Adultery could be committed with, supposing the Thought brought forth into Act, p. 124. Let us review this Passage. ‘Whosoever looketh upon a Woman to lust after her, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart.’ The evident Meaning of these Words is, that whosoever shall gaze on a Woman to lust after her, and instead of rejecting, indulge the secret Workings of Desire, or purpose also to gratify it, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart, he only having escaped for want of Opportunity to accomplish his irregular Desire. It is well known that the Word here translated ‘looketh on,’ means to gaze on, or fix the Eye with the utmost Attention upon: nor can any Thing be more evident than

than that the original Word that is here translated 'a Woman,' is, like $\eta\iota\sigma\alpha$, a general Term, that distinguisheth a Woman from a Man. Yet the Author of *Thelyphthora* would have us think, that the Word Woman here must certainly mean a Woman who is either espoused or hath cohabited with her Husband, (p. 124), as if Adultery could be committed with no other: and the Reason he gives for such Interpretation, and his Inference from it, seem worthy the Attention of all Polygamists, that they may perceive not only by what sound Criticism, but also by what powerful Evidence of Reason and Revelation their Cause can be supported.

Our Author, aware that if he cannot limit the Word Woman in this Passage to an espoused or married Woman, the marrying two or three, or indeed more than one Virgin or Widow at once, must be here condemned as Adultery, hath very consistently with his Attempts upon other Passages, hereafter to be considered, endeavoured to persuade us, that the original Word here translated Woman, 'cannot mean a Woman as generally distinguished from a Man; for, saith he, if it be sinful to look with Desire on any Woman *whom* ever, then it would

be sinful for a Man to desire his own Wife to whom he is lawfully married, or a Virgin to whom he is contracted; and this, saith our Author, (who is particularly fond of running out into Consequences, and entertaining and well-known Anecdotes and Fables), would lead us into all the Absurdities of the ancient Misogamists, who held Marriage to be sinful. In this Place, therefore, proceeds he, it certainly means a Woman considered as related to a Man, and that whether espoused, or that hath cohabited with her Husband, for with no other *can* Adultery be committed. For want of such Distinction, some Commentators, adds he, by letting loose their own Imaginations, have filled many of their Readers with Matter of sore Distress and Bondage of Conscience, as if the Desire after any Female whatsoever came within what they call the spiritual Import of the Seventh Commandment." P. 121. But our Author, in endeavouring to release us from these Matters of *sore* Distress and *Bondage* of Conscience, with which, for want of his *recondite* Distinction, some, I would say the Bulk of the most judicious and learned Commentators, 'have filled us,' unhappily hath really let loose his *own* Imagination, and made a Distinction where

no Difference subsists, and hath proceeded so far as to advance a Position that hath no Foundation in the New Testament, even at the Expence of impeaching the Truth of his own preceding Assertions.

Our Author here expressly contradicts himself. For, in p. 22, he asserts, “that there are no specific Names for married Persons in the Old or New Testament, but only Words for a Man and Woman, that signify Persons of the male and female Sex in general; but when coupled with Pronouns possessive, as *ὁ ἀνὴρ*, thy Man, and *ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ*, his Woman, they denote the marriage Relation.”

Such being our Author’s Concession, let us review the Original of this Passage of St. Matthew, and see whether any Pronoun possessive is coupled in it with the original Word for a Woman, or it means according to his Rule, only a Woman, or Female in general.

The original Words need only be read to settle this Point, and are these, *Ἐν τῷ κρηματισμῷ οὗτις πᾶς ὁ βλεπων γυναῖκα τούτην τοῦ ἐπιγαμίου αὐτῆς, ἢ ἡ ἐμοῦ, εἶπεν αὐτῇ, εἰ π. καλὴν εἶμι—*

The Words here being *οβλεπων γυναικα* without any Pronoun possessive coupled with *γυναικα*, or a Woman, according to our Author's own Rule, must mean any Woman in general, be she Virgin, Widow or Wife. Such are the extraordinary Observations and Deductions of our Author respecting this Passage of Scripture; in farther Reply to which, we must therefore remind him, that it most evidently condemns the personal Intercourse of a married Man with any unmarried Woman; that it most certainly proves that the Desire after any Female in general, except his own Wife, comes within what is called the spiritual Import of the seventh Commandment, that it condemns all Polygamy as Adultery, and therefore evinceth the Error of our Author's Assertion, that Adultery cannot be committed with any but an espoused or married Woman. Adultery certainly cannot be committed in the Instance mentioned by the Author of *Thelyphthora*; though it hath been suggested, that a Case might occur in which a Man could be guilty of a Breach of the seventh Commandment, with his own Wife. But we shall decline the Consideration of such Instance, and all visionary Refinements respecting it, nor particularly take Notice of this Writer's extraordinary

traordinary Succession, that "the Word Woman, here, must signify a married Woman, or else a Man who looks with Desire on his Wife, must commit Adultery with her," as if any Woman in general, meant any Woman whatsoever, and no general Term allowed of any Exception. Dissolving such merely illusive Quibbles, and evasive Artifices, let us readily grant that the Word here meant, must be such an one as Adultery can be committed with; and remind our Reader, that the Author, when he defined Adultery to be the Commerce of the Sexes where the Woman is the Wife of another Man, p. 57, should have truly completed the Definition; by adding also that it is the Commerce of the Sexes where the Man is the Husband of another Woman: for our blessed Lord hath expressly declared, that who ever putteth away his Wife and marrieth another, or hath Commerce with another, committeth Adultery against her, his first Wife.

No matter, therefore, whether the Woman desired be married or not; for if the Man who looks with Desire on her, be married, he committeth Adultery in his Heart; and if an unmarried Man thus looks with Desire on a
 Woman

Woman with whom Adultery can be committed, that is, on a married Woman, *he*, also, committeth Adultery with her in his Heart. Not both, but one of the Parties undoubtedly, must, be married, as we cannot suppose our Saviour to be here prescribing a Law against a Case, or Instance that can never subsist. But yet, nothing can be more evident from our Lord's Words than, that whosoever looketh with Desire on a Woman with whom he can commit Adultery, a married Woman, or a single Woman, if he be married, the Word Woman denoting all Women in general, is an Adulterer, or hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart.

Our Author's Distinction, therefore, hath here no Foundation; nor have our Commentators let loose their Imaginations beyond the Truth, though they have declared that the irregular Desire after any Female whatsoever, with whom Adultery can be committed, comes within the spiritual Import of the seventh Commandment. Nor can any thing hence be more evident, than that Polygamy is a sin under the Dispensation of the Gospel, and that therefore the Prohibition of it *hath Warrant*
from

from the Word of God. For as our Saviour hath here expressly assured us, that whosoever looketh with irregular Desire after any Woman with whom Adultery can be committed, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart; most certainly he who marrieth, or hath personal Intercourse with her, must also be guilty of Adultery. With respect to the Conduct of the Patriarchs, and other Saints who lived before the Promulgation of the Gospel, we shall not enquire into it, nor consider for what Reasons Polygamy was then permitted. Their Example is by no Means in every respect the Object of our Attention.

The Pattern of our blessed Lord is the only Object intitled to our Imitation, as it exemplifies such a complete and perfect Plan of Piety and Morality, as was never before his Incarnation vouchsafed to Mankind. Our Author may be averse from subscribing to this Truth, but hath afforded us an accessional Proof of it. For as the Gospel enjoins a purer Conduct, and prohibits all Polygamy which was permitted by the Old Testament, such Prohibition evinceth the Superiority of the Rule prescribed to our Behaviour in the former, to that of the latter.

It appears also, from the Passages adduced, that, contrary to our Author's Assertions, the Thought of Adultery and Polygamy were really *first condemned* when Christ said, whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart; and that Adultery, therefore, meant not "*quite as much in Moses's Time, as in the Days of Christ and his Apostles;*" that the Thought of Adultery, when Polygamy was permitted, was *not* so sinful as it would have been in St. Paul under the Gospel; that the Scribes and Pharisees were ignorant of the spiritual Sense of the Law; that our Saviour informed them, that unjust Divorce and Polygamy were unlawful under his Dispensation; that not only our exterior Conduct, but our very Thoughts, might be sinful and adulterous, which the Law that forbade them to covet was not understood by them to mean; and that therefore our Lord hath introduced a new Law or Direction concerning those Points.

The Author of *Thelyphthora*, in Page 192, asserts, that 'it is propable that Polygamy was very frequent amongst the first Christians.' 'Why, saith he, did Paul recommend the Choice of Bishops from amongst those who had
but

but one Wife? What Occasion for this Caution, if none had more than one?—In Reply to this Assertion, it might be observed, that after all Suggestions respecting the admitting Converts to the Rites of the Church, who were Polygamists, it might, perhaps, be supported, that not every Man who had long been in Habits of Vice, and Error, could, at once, relinquish them, and perfectly conform, in every Instance, to so pure and strict a Rule of Behaviour as that of the Gospel; and that the divine Wisdom might at first, therefore, avoid too great Rigour in condemning Polygamy, and yet fix such a Mark of Infamy upon so irregular a Practice, as to forbid any one, however extraordinary his Character might be, to undertake the Ministry, who was guilty of it; and also to discourage and condemn it by express Injunctions against it.

This, it is to be confessed, may appear a larger Concession than is necessary in the present Case. For the Injunction of one Wife refers by no Means to the Conduct of the first Christians after their Conversion, but to the Practices of the Jews and Pagans; and we have no Authority from Scripture to assert, that the first Chris-

ans were permitted to be Polygamists, but as our Lord and his Apostles have so particularly prohibited it, have Reason to believe that they conformed to their Prohibitions respecting it.

The Words of the Apostle by no Means authorise us to assert, that the first, or many of the first Christians, were Polygamists after their Conversion. We are very sensible that at the Time when St. Paul wrote the Epistle to Timothy before us, many of the Jews and Pagans were Polygamists, and also particularly guilty of unjustly divorcing their Wives, and marrying others. And, from our Knowledge of this Practice, we learn the true Sense of the Passage before us, in which he enjoins that a Bishop be the Husband of one Wife; which is this, that he have avoideth the Practice of the Jews and Greeks, and not, like them, been guilty of unjustly divorcing one Wife, and marrying another. The Passage therefore evidently refers, not to the Practices of the first Christians after their Conversion, but to those of the Jews and Pagans; and, instead of advancing, directly militates against Polygamy, or the Supposition that the first Christians were guilty of it, by enjoining that a Bishop be not one who hath unjustly

justly divorced one Wife, and married another, or that in this respect he be the Husband of one Wife, which he could not be if he had married a second Wife during the Life of the first, whom he had unjustly dismissed.

The Apostle's Words in this Passage, therefore, *carry no tacit Allowance* of Polygamy, but a direct Prohibition of it, and an obvious Reference to the Practices of the Jews and Greeks, who were guilty of Polygamy and unlawful Divorces, which he forbids as inconsistent with the Conduct of a Christian Pastor, and the Purity of Manners enjoined by the Gospel; and our Author, indeed, might as well have inferred from the Injunctions of St. Paul in this Chapter, that a Bishop ought to be no Striker, not given to much Wine, and not covetous; that Wrath, Intemperance and Covetousness, were frequent amongst the first Christians, as that they were Polygamists, and construe every Prohibition of Vice into a tacit Allowance of it, and an Impeachment of the Conduct of all to whom it was addressed.

But let us attend to our Writer's Remarks upon Part of the Seventh Chapter of the First Epistle

Epistle to the Corinthians. The Apostle in this Chapter answered some Questions of the Corinthians respecting the conjugal State, and in the introductory Verses determines that in some Cases it should be entered into, and continued in, and in others avoided. ‘ Nevertheless, to avoid, or on Account of Fornications, saith the Apostle, let every Man have, or retain his own Wife; and let every Woman have, and retain her own proper Husband. Let the Husband render due Benevolence to the Wife, and in like Manner also the Wife unto the Husband. For the Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Husband; and the Husband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife—their Engagements being mutual, they are obliged to remain appropriate to each other.’ Our Author paraphrases these Words thus: ‘ Let every Man retain the Woman who belongs to him, and not lend her out or suffer her to marry another, nor let him take a Woman who is not his Wife, but another Man’s, to himself. So also let every Woman have her own proper Husband; the Man appropriated to her exclusively of all other Men upon Earth, and not depart, or suffer herself to be lent or given to any other Man. Let the Husband render to the Wife due Benevo-

Benevolence, and likewise the Wife unto the Husband. The Wife hath not Power over her own Body, so as to withdraw herself from the conjugal Debt; but the Husband may, as Matter of Right, have Access to her at all proper Times and Seasons. Likewise the Husband has not Power over his own Body, so as to withdraw from the conjugal Intercourse, with his Wife; but the Wife, as a Debt due from the Contract which the Man is under to her by the very Terms of their Union, has a Right to his Society. Therefore defraud ye not one the other, &c.

With respect to this our Author's Paraphrase, it may be observed, that the Word in the Original, here translated *have* or *retain*, (in the Verse, "Let every Man *have* his own Wife, and every Woman *have* her own proper Husband,") is the same in both Parts of the Verse; and therefore should convey the same Ideas or Injunction, when it coheres with the Words 'every Woman,' or the Wife, as when it agrees with the Words 'every Man,' or the Husband. Our Author, therefore, had no Authority from the Original to suggest that the Apostle in these Passages intended to impose any greater Restraint upon the Wife than upon the Husband; but

but that, as he here enjoins that every Man shall have his own Wife, and not lend her out, or suffer her to marry another Man; so, also, he enjoins that every Woman shall have her own proper Husband, and not suffer *him* to be lent out, or marry any other Woman.

We may hence also observe, that the original Words, here translated ‘her own proper Husband,’ imply, as before remarked, not only such an Appropriation of the Husband to the Wife, as that *she* should not go to any other, but more naturally and obviously, such an Appropriation of the Husband to the Wife, exclusively of all other Women, that *he* should not marry, or have personal Intercourse with any other; and that our Author had no Ground for the Limitation here introduced, by subjoining the Apostle’s Injunction, a Prohibition extending to *only* a matrimonial Connexion with ‘another Man’s Wife:’ when a married Man, during the Life of his first Wife, except in case of lawful Divorce, hath no Power to marry, or have personal Intercourse with any other, but is obliged to remain appropriated to his first Wife, exclusively of all other Women whatsoever.

We readily grant, that the Corinthians were guilty of Fornication and Adultery, of lending out their Wives, and having Women in common. Let us add, that they also, as well as other Heathens, and the Jews, were guilty of Divorce and Polygamy.

Yet, what one Deduction can hence be derived in favour of Polygamy? And, what can more evidently evince the Unlawfulness of Polygamy than the Passages of St. Paul before us?

If, according to our Author's Rule, we interpret them by the general Tenor of the New Testament, nothing can more plainly evince the Unlawfulness of Polygamy.

The general Tenor of the Declarations of our blessed Lord and his Apostles, is, that whosoever dismisseth his Wife, except for Fornication, and marieth another, committeth Adultery against her, and that we are to conform to the primitive Institution of Matrimony, which could not permit Polygamy. The Apostle, therefore, by commanding that every Man should have or retain his own Wife, and

E

every

every Woman her own proper Husband, must certainly mean to forbid not only all Fornication, and unjust Divorce, but also all Adultery and Polygamy. The same Truth is glaringly evident also, from the subsequent Words that ‘ the Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Husband:’ and, in *like Manner*, also, ‘ the Husband hath not Power over *his* own Body, but the Wife;’ they being obliged to continue appropriate to each other. It hence evidently appears that the Wife’s Right is equal to that of the Husband, expressed in exactly the same Words and declared to be the same, *ομοίως δε και ο ανηρ*, and that as the Husband hath Power over the Person of the Wife, so also, in like Manner, hath the Wife Power over the Person of her Husband. That therefore also the original Words *ιδιον ανδρα* and *εαυτω γυναικα*, rendered her own proper Husband, and his own Wife, after all, mean but the same Thing, unless the Difference was made with a particular View to the Discouragement of Polygamy, and unjust Divorce, and evince her peculiar Right to the *whole* Person of her Husband.

Certainly,

Certainly, such are the Laws of Christ, and his Apostles, concerning "the Business of Divorce and Polygamy," which therefore, contrary to our Author's Assertion, depend not "wholly upon the Law of Moses." Moses permitted Polygamy, and unjust Divorce; Christ prohibits both, and hath reduced Marriage to its primitive Institution; therefore he hath certainly introduced a new, or another Law respecting them.

With regard to our Author's Assertion, that St. Paul's Injunction concerning the Choice of the Pastors of the Church, must imply that there were many Christians, *some of whom*, but who, at the Time *when he wrote*, had more Wives than one; and that 'if this had not been the Case, it would have been as much out of the Question to have mentioned the having but one Wife, as to have said that none should be chosen but those who had but one Head, or one Body, when it was not to be supposed that any Man had more.' P. 205.

Be it observed, that the Case is not parallel, for though we cannot suppose a Man to have more than one Head, or Body, yet he certainly might have not been fit for the Ministry, as he

VIII.

The author desires me to ask myself if I did not read his book with prejudice. "Did not your prejudices (says he) incline you to wish that they might rather be justified than removed?"—I answer sincerely, that notwithstanding the strong prepossessions I had in favor of the author, yet I *had* imbibed very strong prejudices against his performance before I read it. These prejudices I attribute in great measure to some letters I had read, which were written by one *Paul of Tarsus* on the other side of the question, and when I came to read your book, I really thought he was more than a match for you.

IX.

Though it seemed by our author's sentiments as contained in the two first volumes of *Thelyphtora*, that no such thing as fornication could exist, yet he now tells us there is such an animal in the world as a whore, and gives us a most wonderful

the seventh commandment, and if not by that commandment, then by no other, and consequently can be no sin; for *where no law is, there is no transgression.*

account

account of this creature in the following words :

“ If this woman” (who has intercourse with one man and is therefore according to our author, the wife of that man by the divine law) “ departs from this *first* man “ to another, the bond with the first is “ totally vacated by her act of adultery; so “ that the first man is totally released from “ her. If afterwards she goes from man “ to man, and sells or gives her favors pro- “ miscuously to all alike, she is every “ body’s : no man can lay claim to her, “ or look upon her as his *property*, or be “ injured as a given appropriated husband “ might be, by her infidelity. She is in “ short, *nullius in bonis*, and is an whore, “ harlot or prostitute, in the true sense of “ these words.”

From this very extraordinary definition it appears,

1st. That no unmarried woman (i. e. according to our author’s ideas of marriage) can be a whore.

2dly. That no woman whatever can commit whoredom till she has first committed adultery.

might have been one who had divorced one Wife, and married another; and therefore not so blameless and irreproachable, as the Apostle requires him to be. As to our Author's Remark, that the Injunction of the Apostle must imply that many of the first Converts to Christianity were Polygamists, because in his Epistle to Titus the Words are, *Εἰ τις ἐστὶν μίαν γυναῖκα ἀνδρα*; 'if any be the Husband of one Wife,' and therefore must relate to the *then* Situation of the Converts to Christianity; it is to be observed, that our Author hath here omitted a Word in this Passage. For St. Paul, directing Titus on what Principles he should proceed in the Choice of Christian Pastors, here saith, *Εἰ τις ἐστὶν ἀνεβλήτος, μίαν γυναῖκα ἀνδρ*—'If any one be blameless; the Husband of one Wife.' This Omission, it is presumed, was intended to more closely connect the *εἰ τις ἐστὶν* with *μίαν γυναῖκα ἀνδρα*, and thus cause the Apostle to appear to more strongly speak to our Writer's Purpose.

But this is not the Apostle's Intention; for though the Word *ἐστὶν*, or *be*, is here used in the present Tense, yet the Passage, as before evinced, refers not to the Polygamy of Christians after their Conversion, but to the *then* Situation of Jews and Pagans, and the former Conduct

duct of those Converts who had been guilty of Polygamy or unlawful Divorce before their Conversion, and therefore *had had* more than one Wife; and accordingly the Apostle who required that the Pastors of the Christian Church should be Persons of exemplary Purity, and eminent for every social and personal Virtue, enjoins that they be not chosen from amongst those who had had more than one Wife, or unjustly dismissed one and married another; but that if a Person *be* the Husband of one Wife, *i. e.* hath not *unjustly* dismissed one Wife and married another, he might be constituted a Bishop.

Our Author's Position therefore hath no Foundation from the Passage before us; and I conceive that we might as well suppose that all the first Christians were guilty after their Conversion, of Extortion, Theft, Covetousness, Idolatry, and of all other Vices mentioned in St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, as of Polygamy. But St. Paul hath assured us to the contrary; and having particularly mentioned Fornicators, Whoremongers, and Adulterers, as well as Persons who were guilty of the preceding Vices, informs us, that such were some
of

of the Corinthians in their unconverted State, but that divine Grace had produced an happy Change in their State and Disposition, and they were now, since their Conversion, washed, sanctified, and purified.

Our Author observes upon these Passages of St. Paul, that it can hardly be supposed that if Polygamy were sinful, the great Apostle should be so liberal and particular in his Epistle to the Corinthians, in condemning other Species of illicit Commerce between the Sexes, and yet omit this in his black Catalogue. In Reply to this Suggestion, we must observe, that though the Apostle hath not inserted the Word Polygamy in that Catalogue, yet hath he, by no Means, omitted to condemn the Crime it denotes.

For the Apostle in the Passages before us precautions the Corinthians of the fatal Effects of those Sins in which they had indulged themselves before their Conversion, and against all vain Imaginations that their having embraced Christianity would secure them in the Practice of them. ‘ Be not deceived, saith he, neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor
4 Effeminate,

Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God, and such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' Polygamy, a Community of Women, Divorce and Adultery, being, confessedly, the Crimes of which the Corinthians were guilty before their Conversion, and that occasioned this Epistle of St. Paul, most certainly, he hath here shewn his Zeal for the Law of Marriage, and condemned Polygamy as well as other Species of illicit Commerce between the Sexes, when he assureth them, that neither Fornicators nor Adulterers shall inherit the Kingdom of God. If our Judgment respecting the Meaning of the Apostle should, as our Author alleges, be directed by the Consideration of the Manners and Customs of the Corinthians, and the Tenour of the New Testament; the leading their Wives, a Community of Women, Divorce and Polygamy, being, at the Time St. Paul wrote, the Crimes they were guilty of; and this Apostle having declared that the Husband hath no Power to transfer his Person to a second Wife

during the Life of his first, and our blessed Lord having, in various Passages, expressly asserted, that whosoever shall unjustly dismiss his Wife, and marry another, committeth Adultery against her, St. Paul must have considered Polygamy as Adultery, and therefore, when he here condemns Fornication and Adultery, he condemns Polygamy as well as other Species of illicit Commerce of the Sexes. If farther Proofs need be adduced, evincing that St. Paul hath condemned Polygamy as Adultery, and that the early Christians were not Polygamists, those Proofs will occur in the immediately subsequent Observations.

Our Author, Page 380, again considers the Passages of our Lord in the Gospels of St. Matthew and Mark, respecting Divorce and Polygamy, and repeats the Assertion, that our Lord was not laying down a new Law; and that had he attempted any Thing opposite to the Law of Moses, he would have fallen into the Snare of the Pharisees, who questioned him with a View to reproach him as an Enemy to it.—The Pharisees, proceeds our Author, attempted no Reply, which would certainly not have been the Case, had they understood him to have spoken

ken againſt Polygamy; neither did his own Disciples underſtand him to ſpeak of any Thing but Divorce; for their Concluſion is, “If the Caſe of a Man be ſo with his Wife, it is not good to marry;” *i. e.* if a Man cannot get rid of his Wife when he pleaſeth, he had better not marry at all. P. 384.—The Concluſion, ſaith our Author, muſt have been made from their underſtanding Chriſt to ſpeak of Divorce; for it is totally foreign from the Matter of Polygamy. How could they poſſibly mean that a Man had better have no Wife at all, if he could not have more than one at once? It muſt likewiſe be ſuppoſed that they did not underſtand their Maſter; for if they had, he would doubtleſs have ſet them right in his Reply, and not have ſaid what clearly ſhews them to have underſtood him right.”

In Reply to theſe Suggeſtions, be it obſerv'd, that the Pharifees attempted no reproachful Answer to our Lord's Prohibition of a juſt Divorce, though they plainly underſtood that his Prohibition was contrary to the Moſaic Permiſſion. Why therefore ſhould our Author aſſert, that if they had underſtood our Lord to have

fpoken againſt Polygamy, they would certainly have replied to him?

With reſpect to our Lord's Diſciples, the very Reply which our Lord made to their Concluſion, from which our Author afferts that it appears that they underſtood him aright, evinceth that his Diſcourſes related to both Polygamy and Divorce, or at leaſt that the former was deducible from, and neceſſarily implied in them.

Our Lord's Diſciples ſay, "If this be the Caſe between a Man and his Wife, it is not good to marry." But he ſaid to them, "All Men cannot receive this Saying, that it is not good to marry, but only they to whom it is given, or who are able to ſubdue their Inclinations towards the conjugal State." If Polygamy was allowed as lawful by our Lord, and his Diſciples had more than one Wife each, his Reply would not have been pertinent to their Interference. For in ſuch Caſe, there would have been no Occaſion to have ſaid, that 'all Men cannot receive this Saying,' ſince, if one of a Diſciple's Wives was diſagreeable to him, he would have had others that would prevent his Inability to receive that Saying, or govern his
Incli-

Inclinations towards the conjugal Union. The Disciples, therefore, meant, not ‘ that they had better have no Wife at all, if they could not have more than one;’ but that, as they could not have more than one Wife at once, they had better not marry, than be obliged to retain such a one as might render them unhappy.

The Conclusion, therefore, is by no means foreign to the Matter of Polygamy any more than to that of Divorce, but is evidently deduced from their Obligation to have no more than one Wife at once, and is amply evinceth, that they understood our Lord’s Decourſe to relate to both Polygamy and Divorce.

Our Author, in Page 205, affirms, that the Word *another*, in the Paſſage, ‘ who ever ſhall put away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and ſhall marry another, committeth Adultery againſt her,’ muſt agree with the antecedent *γυναικα*, or Wife; that therefore the Word *Wife* muſt be underſtood as following the Word *αλλω*, another, and this may be conſtrued in the Senſe of *αλλωτινα γυναικω*, *another Man’s*

Man's Wife; and this extraordinary Construction, he observes, is confirmed by the first Epistle to the Corinthians, in which the Word *αλλης* is so used, *υπο αλλης συνειδησεως*, being there rightly translated, “another Man's Conscience.” St. Paul, giving Directions concerning the eating Things offered to Idols, recommends the abstaining from them to avoid Offence, and for Conscience-sake. ‘Conscience, saith he, not thine own, but of the others, who may be offended; for, in Acts obvious to Observation, this is to be recommended, but in what lies between God and my Soul, why is my Liberty judged of another Man's Conscience?’ *υπο αλλης συνειδησεως*. Of what Service this Quotation can be to our Author's Cause, is to all who read it, surely! a Problem. He cannot, certainly, mean that the Word *αλλης* means *only* another *Man's* Conscience, and that it doth not also mean another *Woman's* Conscience! Or shall we suppose him to have adopted the Assertion that Women have no Souls, and that therefore all the Apostles Directions were only intended for the Conduct of their Husbands?

Our Author's Construction, and designed Limitation of the Sense of this Passage, can
neither

neither be defended by the original Words, nor general Tenor of the New Testament. For though the original Word, *ἡ*, hath a Pronoun possessive coupled with it in the former Part of this Verse, as *ἡ* *ἡ*, and therefore is rightly rendered his Wife, yet, what Authority can we have from the latter Part of it, where we have only *ἡ*, to affirm, that, if we understand the Word *ἡ* to follow it, it must also be coupled with a Pronoun possessive, or be understood as if it was *ἡ*. The Verse, in Truth, will admit of no such Construction, nor could possibly, even with his utmost Violence, be pressed into his Service. Whoever putteth away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and marrieth another Wife, that is, any other Woman, be she Virgin, or Widow, whom he shall make his Wife, committeth Adultery against her, is undeniably the most natural and obvious, and the only Sense in which any impartial Reader of the Words can possibly understand them. Let us, by a familiar Instance, exhibit the Absurdity of such forced Interpretation as our Author hath adopted.

Suppose two Bankers or Merchants, Adventurers for Life, had articulated, that no third

Person should be admitted to a Partnership in their Houses, and according to such the original Design of their Contract, it should by Deed be expressed that, " Whosoever of them, without reasonable Cause, shall dismiss his Partner and article with another, committeth Injustice against him, &c. Would any Court of Justice hesitate one Moment to pronounce the Party who should presume to thus dismiss his Partner, and article with another, to be guilty of Injustice, and liable to such Penalty as ought to be adjudged to such Procedure ?

Could the Offender, in this Case, exculpate himself by pleading, that he had not articulated with one who had been unjustly dismissed from a Partnership with others, but that he was one who had never before been in Business ?

Would any one who wanted not to make the Words of the said Deed conform to his own Prejudices and Designs, instead of regulating his own Sentiments by it, ever dream of pressing so plain, and express a Declaration into his Service by offering so great Violence to it ? Would any impartial Reader ever conceive, that the Word, *another*, in ' Whosoever shall dismiss

dismiss his Partner, and article with another, must mean, not any Man whatsoever, but only one who had before been *another Man's Partner*?

What an extraordinary Figure must a Pleader make who should adopt our Author's Mode of Interpretation, and thus comment upon these Words! "Whosoever shall, without reasonable Cause, dismiss his Partner, and article with another, committeth Injustice against him." "The Word another, must agree with the Antecedent, Partner; therefore the Word Partner must be understood as following the Word another, and this may be construed in the Sense of another Man's Partner." "And therefore whosoever dismisseth his Partner, and articles with another who hath not been in Business before, is not guilty of, or committeth no Injustice against him."

I am confident that Men in Business will view such Mode of Construction with no small Degree of Surprize, and not in the least be disposed to thank our Author for so *frivolous* a Comment. Nor can it be conceived, as the sacred Writings are our Rule of Sentiment and Conduct, that Society will acknowledge any Obligations for such Violence offered to them, since,

by such Measures, they may be compelled to subscribe to the most pernicious Positions that any partial Writer may chuse to advance. Indeed, such being our Author's Mode of Interpretation, it must be confessed, that after all his Harangues concerning popular Error, and his entertaining and anile Fables, not to forget that of the respectable Whittington, we cannot give that Credit to his Judgment and Impartiality, to which his Imagination may suggest he hath a Right.

In Truth, after such our Author's Mode of Interpretation, we cannot even consider him, as he seems to represent himself, in his second Volume, in so elevated and illuminated a Situation as 'the radiant Inhabitant of the Moon,' though as he hath been erecting Castles in the Air, he may probably have had a more than ordinary Connexion with that Satellite. To this Suggestion it is apprehended that some, who consider his laudable Attempts to assert Polygamy, and recommend it to the Patronage of those in Power, may be inclined to subscribe, and at the same Time applaud his Modesty, and *Diffidence*, when he ascribes to himself a peerless Infallibility, and represents all those who shall presume
to

to dissent from him, as fit to be only ranked with the Tribe of ignorant Souldiers, Cavillers, and Objectors, perhaps unworthy of a Superiority to the present *Quintipole* that vainly trifled the Glories of the *perpetual* Reign of the Moon!—But to proceed.

Neither our Author's *unlimited* Application, nor the *Indistinctness* of his Definition of Wives that prevailed among the *Pagans*, can ever be the Cause of *Mistake*, and not be guilty of *Adultery*, if the said Wife was a *divorced* Woman. We have already *discuss'd* this *notion* in our View to four Sections of our *Book*, and have not been neglectful of any Part of what hath been offered, with our usual and Observations respecting *them*.

Our blessed Lord, in the Gospel of St. Mark, and St. Luke, declareth, that whosoever marieth her that is put away, committeth Adultery: But these Words can by no Means signify, that the married Man who during the life of his Wife marieth another woman a *Virgin* or *widow*, or any other single Woman, committeth *Adul-*

tery, there being no such particular Limitations in these or any other Passages of our Lord and his Apostles respecting this Subject. The Suggestions of our Author and others upon this Point, are merely conjectural, unsupported by any particular Evidence, and contrary to the various Declarations of the New Testament.

Our blessed Lord expressly declareth in St. Matthew's Gospel, that whosoever shall put away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and shall marry another, committeth Adultery;—and in St. Mark's Gospel, that whosoever shall put away his Wife and marry another, committeth Adultery against her.—Here are evidently no Limitations of Adultery to the alone Instance of a married Man marrying a divorced Woman, or another Man's Wife, but the Words are obviously general. The Word, *another*, evidently being a general Term, and denoting any other Woman, be she Virgin or Widow, any Woman whom he shall presume to take as a Wife during the Life of his first. Our Author suggests, Page 374, that had our Lord intended to have

condemned those who were guilty of Polygamy, "he would scarcely have made Use of Words which do not describe their Situation, but of Words that did. It is very plain, proceeds he, that he that putteth away his Wife by giving her a Bill of Divorcement, could have nothing to do with the Man who took two Wives together, or one to another, and cohabited with both." But, surely! it is very plain that whoever putteth away his Wife and marryeth another, committeth Adultery, *had* something to do with the Man who took two Wives together, as well as with him who should lawfully divorce them. Had not our Author ended the Quotation at the Word *Divorcement* and given us but a *Part* of the Verse, the Reader must have seen that it *had* something to do with the Polygamist; and this being the Case, our Lord hath used Words descriptive of his Situation.

Before our Author had attempted the precise Limitation of these Words to the Case of Divorce alone, he should have been able to have evinced that Divorce and Exchange of Wives were the *only* Practices of the Jews and Pagans at the Time of our Lord's Incarnation, and then he have deduced that such Practices must be the *only*

only Objects of these Discourses, and that consequently Divorce alone was the Subject intended by them. But our Author will acknowledge that the History of that Period evinceth, that not only Divorce and Exchange of Wives, but a Community of Women and Polygamy, or Fornication and Adultery, were the Practices of that Age: and, therefore, without ' interpreting Scripture according to our own Conceits, but by considering the Times when, Places where, and Situations of the Persons to whom it was address'd,' we farther deduce, that they afford no Ground for such Limitation as our Author would fix upon them.

With respect to the general Tenor of the New Testament, nothing can be more inconsistent with it than our Author's extraordinary Limitation. The New Testament gives no more Power to a married Man to marry another Woman, during the Life of his first Wife, than it gives to a Wife to marry another Man during the Life of her first Husband. St. Paul expressly commands both Husband and Wife, to continue inviolably, and intirely appropriate to each other.

To avoid Fornication, faith he, as before observed, let every Man have his own Wife, and let every Woman have her own proper Husband; let the Husband render to the Wife due Benevolence, and likewise also the Wife to the Husband: The Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Husband; and likewise also, the Husband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife. Demand ye not therefore one another, *et c.* The Rights of both Wife and Husband are supposed to be equal, the Husband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife; the Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Husband. If it be urged that the Husband may get, according to that Word, *and he shall multiply*, and have more Wives than one; it may be also urged, that the Wife may divide her Affection, and have more *Husbands* than one. To jointly affirm that each may do so, is to be jointly absurd; and assert that both Husband and Wife have, and have not, the Power over each others Persons, at the same Time. If the Wife hath Power over the Person of her Husband he cannot confer it upon another Woman; and if the Husband hath Power over the Person

of

of his Wife, she cannot transfer it to another Man.

The Wife, under the Dispensation of the Gospel, may certainly plead the same Rights, in that Respect, as her Husband, the Apostle having made no sort of Difference in the Case before us. And our Saviour also speaks the same Truth: for he not only declares, that if a Woman shall put away her Husband, and marry another, *she* committeth Adultery; but also that whosoever shall put away his Wife, except for Fornication, and marry another, committeth Adultery against her. Mark 10.

The Passages of the New Testament, respecting the Laws of Matrimony, therefore, declare the Rights of both Husband and Wife, to be equal, as to the Point before us, and exclude all Pretence for such Limitation as some, by forced and erroneous Expositions, would extort from them.

I shall dismiss this Point with the subsequent farther Observations upon our Author's extraordinary Construction of the former Part of the ninth Verse of the nineteenth of St. Matthew.

Our

Our Author desiring to assert the Privilege of a married Man marrying any Woman except another Man's Wife; let us just remark the Absurdity of such Limitation, and assert the Rights of the Wife, by translating a similar Passage of St. Mark, according to our Author's Mode of Construction.

The Word, *another*, in whosoever shall put away his Wife and marry another, saith our Author, ' must agree with the Antecedent, Wife; therefore the Word, *Wife*, must be understood as following the Word, *another*; and may be rendered in the Sense of another Man's Wife.'

According to such Translation of this Passage of St. Matthew, let us translate the following Passage of St. Mark: ' If a Woman shall put away her Husband, and marry another, she committeth Adultery.'

The Word *another*, say we, must here agree with the Antecedent, $\alpha\delta\epsilon\alpha$, or *Husband*; therefore the Word *Husband* must be understood as following the Word $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega$, or *another*, and this may be construed another Woman's Husband.

According to such Mode of Interpretation, therefore, our Lord's Words can here only mean that, if a Woman shall put away her Husband and marry another Woman's Husband, she committeth Adultery: and the plain and obvious Inference deducible from this Interpretation is, that our Wives may put us away, and at once marry as many other Men as they please, provided they are not the Husbands of other Women, without being guilty of Adultery.

Such forced and unwarrantable Interpretations of Scripture may, perhaps, be permitted to evince the Absurdity of them; but, surely! should, in all other Instances, be cautiously avoided, lest the Ignorant be deceived, and the Vicious encouraged to persevere in a Conduct that may prove fatal to their most important Interests.

With respect to the Consideration of the Law of Moses, the divine Permissions extended to those who were under it, and other Suggestions of this Writer before us, they exceed the Limits of my Design; which was, to consider only the Passages of the New Testament,

ment, respecting the Laws of Marriage, that he hath erroneously interpreted; and evince that Polygamy, allowed under the old Testament, is prohibited by Christ and his Apostles; because upon their Authority alone, depends the Truth of that Point here treated.

Our Author, however, having endeavoured to deduce the Lawfulness of Polygamy from the Mosaic Permission of it, and our Lord's Declarations that he came not to destroy the Mosaic moral Law, but to fulfil it, I shall conclude what hath been offered, with some Observations respecting such this Writer's Deduction.

The Laws of the Old and New Testament certainly afford a complete Rule of Sentiment and Conduct. But yet, as, according to our Author's Assertion, the Law of Moses permitted Polygamy and unjust Divorces, and Polygamy and unjust Divorces are prohibited by the Gospel, we cannot but in those Respects, amongst others, consider the Gospel as a more perfect, explicit, and complete Rule of Sentiment, and Conduct, than the Law; and, con-

frequently, than any that was ever before vouchsafed to Mankind.

Our blessed Lord, exhorting to Beneficence, and reproving the Pharisees for their Derision, and undue Attachment to secular Pursuits, acquaints them, that a Dispensation was opening to the World, that would prove adequate to the Conviction of their Errors, and a perfect and effectual Rule of Behaviour.

‘ The Law and the Prophets, said he, were until John; since that Time, the Kingdom of God is preached, and every one presseth into it.’

Yet, it is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass away, than for one Tittle of the Law to fail.

And then, to evince that he meant to advance and perfect, and not destroy or impair the Law, he added that ‘ Whosoever puts away his Wife, and marries another, commits Adultery.’ Luke 16.

Our Lord’s Design in these Passages, evidently, is to suggest that he and John had revealed

vealed a more excellent Rule of Sentiment and Conduct than that afforded by the Law and Prophets: that he and John had prescribed more noble Precepts respecting Benevolence and Beneficence, and a proper Contempt of the World, than could be found in the Law or Prophets; who endeavoured to influence Men to the Performance of their Duty in general, by only temporal Motives. The Kingdom of God is now preached, said he, and every one presseth into it; being superior to the Influence of secular Objects, and animated by the most undoubted Assurances of endless Bliss and Glory. And, as a farther Instance in Proof of this Truth, as well as that he came to perfect the Law of Moses, he said, that ‘Whosoever puts away his Wife and marieth another, commits Adultery; and whosoever marieth her that is put away from her Husband, commits Adultery:’ intimating that the Law permitted unjust Divorces, but the Gospel expressly forbids them. And, in the Verse immediately preceding, obviating any Suggestion respecting his having a Design to destroy the Law, he declared, that ‘Heaven and Earth should sooner pass away, than one Tittle of the Law fail;’ according to his Declarations in other Passages, that he came

not

not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it; that instead of abating the Force of it, he, as in the Instances adduced, came πληρωσαι, to fulfil, advance, perfect, and complete it.

Our blessed Lord was the true Light that enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World, or, according to the Hebrew Mode of speaking, every Man that is born of Woman. He was the true Light that enlighteneth every Man, both Jews and Pagans, παντα ανθρωπου ερχομενου εις το κοσμον, and came idto the World, not surely to perform what was unnecessary, and only what Moses had *already* done? If this had been the Case, if Moses had sufficiently enlightened every Man, how could the Evangelist here stile our Saviour, το φως αληθινου ο φωτιζει παντα ανθρωπου ερχομενου εις το κοσμον, the true Light that enlighteneth all Men, both Jews and Gentiles, that come into the World?

Our Lord is certainly the true and only Light that *duly* enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World. For he alone hath brought Life and Immortality to *full* Light, afforded us the most undoubted Assurances of eternal Happiness in a future State, and shewed us the

Way that will infallibly lead to it, by prescribing such a perfect and complete Rule of Sentiment and Conduct, as was never before his Incarnation revealed to Mankind.

Our Saviour came not to destroy the typical, prophetic, or moral Part of the Law, but to fulfil what was typical by the Law, and foretold by the Prophets, to assert the civil and spiritual Import of the Moral and civil Law, and to advance and complete it. Our Author having asserted, that Polygamy was permitted by the Mosaic Law, and therefore, as he says, can have no Pretence upon which to offer a testimony, that our Lord, by permitting Polygamy, hath destroyed one Title of the moral Law of Moses. For if Polygamy, permitted by Moses, be not immoral, and therefore hath no relation to the moral Law, our Lord by permitting Polygamy, cannot have destroyed any Part of that Law.

Our Author suggests in Page 323, that if we assert that our Saviour hath revived an old, or exhibited a new Law, respecting Marriage, we shall adopt the Errors of Socrates and Mahomet, who affirmed that the Law of Moses was abrogated.

abrogated by Christ and others, and that a new and more excellent Law than that of Moses is now prescribed to our Conduct.

As our Writer is particularly fond of deducing Consequences as Discouragements to the Adoption of Truths that militate against him, it may be necessary, previously to the Reply to the Suggestions before us, to declare that the Author of these Observations upon the Treatise on Female Ruin, is as sincere a Friend to the Protestant Religion, and as remote from Heterodoxy, as the Writer of that Treatise can possibly be: that the Author of these Observations hath as great a Regard for the Fair Sex, and ever was as much inclined to the conjugal Union as any the sincerest Votary of Hymen existing: that the Author of these Observations is at this Time, and many Years hath been, a married Man: and that though his Situation is such as might render him superior to ordinary Restraint, yet hath he ever adhered to, and observed the established Laws of Marriage, from Motives of Regard to the Injunctions of revealed Religion respecting it.

With

With respect to our Author's Suggestions, that if we assert that Christ hath exhibited a new Law relating to Marriage, we must adopt the Errors of Socinus or Mahomet, who affirmed that the Law of Moses was abrogated, and that our Lord and others had introduced a new Law more excellent than the former; surely we may remark, that our Writer hath exonerated *himself* from all Imputation of that Insanity which he seems willing to indirectly ascribe not only to Infidels, but also to all sincere Christians who dissent from him. For, whereas he justly observes with Mr. Locke, that 'Madness is usually allowed to be so far consistent with itself, as to argue right from wrong Principles,' and hath most certainly properly applied this Observation to the impious Attempts of Socinus: yet hath our Author, in the Suggestions before us, not argued *right* from *wrong* Principles, but, consistently with *himself*, argued wrong, from right Principles. We contend not that the moral Law is abrogated, but that our Lord hath perfected it, and exhibited a new Command, prohibiting Polygamy; and how such an Assertion can entitle those who adopt it to the Denominations of Socinians, Mahomedans, or Madmen,

men, must surely be a Problem that cannot easily be solved.

We are certainly obliged to observe the moral Precepts of the Mosaic Law, in all Instances where it corresponds with those of the Gospel, but must ingenuously confess that if, in any Instance, it differeth from that of the Gospel, or permits what the Gospel prohibits, we, as Christians, must give the Preference to the latter. The Mosaic Law, according to our Author, permits Polygamy; we are convinced that the Christian Law prohibits it: we are therefore indispensably obliged to obey the latter, though its Injunctions are contrary to such Mosaic Permission. As to our Author's Suggestions respecting the Immutability of the Law of Moses, and our Lord's Intention never to assume Authority to abrogate it, but only to fulfil all Righteousness, attest the Perfection of the Law, and illustrate and explain it—Our blessed Lord certainly came to divest the Law of the false Interpretations of the Jews, and to explain, perfect, and complete it; and therefore if there be any Improvement, or Alteration of that Law, or any Revival of an old Law, or any new Precept exhibited in the Gospel, all Christians, knowing

knowing them, are indispensably obliged to observe them.

The Plea of the Immutability, or Perpetuity of the Law of Moses, cannot excuse us if we are guilty of Polygamy under the Dispensation of the Gospel; the Mosaic Permission of Polygamy could not be intended to be perpetual, because Christ and his Apostles have abrogated it, and no Christian can pretend to indulge a Liberty that they have prohibited. The Lawfulness of unjust Divorce might as well be deduced from the Immutability and Perpetuity of the Law of Moses, as that of Polygamy. Our blessed Lord declared, that not one Tittle of the Law should fail, and that he came not to destroy, but fulfil it; yet he hath most expressly abrogated the Permission of Divorce in those Instances in which it was permitted by Moses.

Our Saviour certainly 'founded his Claim to the Character of the Messiah on the Old Testament, and never assumed Authority to abrogate the moral Law of Moses;' but yet he hath perfected and completed it, and enacted a Law contrary to the Permission of Divorce and Po-

lygamy, without impeaching his own Veracity, or destroying the Mosaic System of Morals. Our Lord, certainly, might protest against all Intention to abolish the Mosaic Institutes, and yet, without any Impeachment of his Veracity, illustrate, perfect, and complete them; for, surely, Completion and Abolition are not synonymous Terms!

Our Saviour submitted to the Baptism of John, to fulfil all Righteousness, to own the Institutions, comply with the Precepts, and justify the Wisdom of God in sending John to prepare his Way, by calling Men to Repentance.

In the 11th of Saint Matthew, our Saviour saith of St. John, that he was more than a Prophet; that none had risen greater than John; and yet, that he who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven, that the least Prophet under the Dispensation of the Gospel, is greater than he.— John is here represented as superior to all ancient Prophets, on account of his Knowledge of the Mysteries of the Gospel, his Testimony to Christ, and the Success of his Labours, as well as his having been foretold by ancient Prophecy, and his miraculous Birth; yet, saith our Lord, he who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven, is
greater

Seduction, by no Means expressly commanding Polygamy, nor indisputably extending to every Man; and our Saviour could not abrogate what never subsisted. Our Lord hath revived an old or advanced a new Law respecting Marriage, and abolished the Permission of Polygamy, but, by no means, hath destroyed any Law of Moses that commanded it; because no such Law ever subsisted.

Our Saviour certainly attested the Excellence of the Law when he declared, that there is no Commandment greater than those respecting our Love to God and Man.

The Commandment respecting our Love of God, is the principal and fundamental Command of the Law, and that to which all other are reducible and subordinate. The Law respecting the Love of our Neighbour is also like unto it. Every Duty to Man is reducible to, and will necessarily result from this Principle. The Law and the Prophets depend upon these Commandments, it being the Intention of all Revelation to promote them.

Grant

Grant we, therefore, these Truths also that our Lord, as before observed, hath divested the Law of the false Interpretations of the Jews, fully explained it, and declared that he came to fulfil it; let us even also indulge our Author with his Assertion that, when our Lord said he had given to his Disciples a *new* Commandment, that Commandment which is particularly styled the Law of *Christ*, he meant only to establish, and more powerfully enforce, an *old* Commandment; yet what Advantage can possibly be derived from these Concessions, to our Author's Cause? Will these Concessions evince, that because our Lord came not to abolish the Mosaic moral Law, he could not fulfil, perfect, and complete it? Will they evince, that he could not forbid a Practice that Moses had never enjoined? Because they are inconsistent with an Intention to abrogate the Law, can they also be inconsistent with a Design to prohibit Polygamy, which the Law never commanded?

If our Author would effectually advance his Purpose, it should be recollected that it *will* be incumbent upon him to not only exhibit unquestionable Evidence against the Abrogation of the Mosaic Permission of Polygamy, but also to produce

produce an *exprefs* Command of Polygamy from the Law of Moses. Previously to the Impeachment of our Lord's Veracity, who protested against the Abolition of the Law, diligent Search after the Command of Polygamy should be made amongst the Mosaic Institutes; and if our Author's Imagination should suggest to him, that the *desirable* Injunction hath not eluded his Inquiry, he will have the Satisfaction of conceiving that he is intitled to no trifling Acknowledgments from many *well-disposed* People, whose Minds have hitherto been filled with Matters of *fore* Restraint, by those of our Commentators who were incapable of such *deep*, and *beneficial* Investigation. Nor hath our Author Reason to apprehend, that the Result of such *laudable* Inquiries can prove, in the least, inconsistent with his Professions as a Freethinker in these Points, or as a *Friend* to the Law, and an Enemy to *vulgar* Prejudice, and Preconception. For the utmost Consequences of the Investigation of a Mosaic Injunction of Polygamy, can prove only that Moses commanded all Votaries of **H**ymen not merely to look with Desire after, but to freely have personal Intercourse with, and, at once, marry as many
 Women

Women as they pleased; and that all irregular Desire and Commerce between the Sexes, and Adultery and Seduction, instead of being censurable, were commendable and virtuous, under the Mosaic Dispensation. But, *amato ludo*, it must be ingenuously confessed, that such our Author's Researches would be intirely unnecessary; for could the Result of them prove an express Command of Polygamy, yet, as before observed, we as Christians, must still be indispensibly obliged to adhere to the Injunctions of the Gospel which expressly forbid it.

But to proceed. Christ hath, certainly, reduced the Law of Marriage to its primitive Institution, and abrogated all Permission of Polygamy, and uniuſt Divorce. Christ, therefore, hath prohibited, what our Author asserts was before permitted or dispensed with; and yet acted consistently with his Declaration, that he came not to destroy, but to fulfil, advance and complete the Law: The Law of Moses was primarily addressed to, and intended for, the Jews; and our Saviour hath perfected, advanced and rendered it, by the *Accession* of the *Gospel*, a most complete Rule of Faith and Conduct to all Mankind.

To these Truths it is presumed our Author will readily subscribe, unless he would avow a Purpose to advance the Doctrines and Commands of the Old Testament to a Superiority over those of the New, or at least to an Equality with the Gospel as an universal Rule of Sentiment and Conduct, to which the Old Testament asserts no Claim.

Our Author asserts, that the Prohibition of Polygamy by our Lord, would prove an Impeachment of the divine Wisdom and Prescience, ‘ as arguing an Imbecility or Weakness
 ‘ of Understanding and Knowledge, like that
 ‘ of human Legislators, who make Laws to
 ‘ remedy Evils as they arise before them, but
 ‘ cannot tell what a Day may bring forth; and
 ‘ therefore repeal at one Time, the Law which
 ‘ they made at another.’ Page 363.—This, it is confessed, is a pretty strong Assertion, and seems to border upon something worse than Infanity.

However, the Absurdity of this Suggestion is adequate to its Strength and Confidence. For nothing can be more evident, than that such a Prohibition of Polygamy is so remote from all
 Impeach-

Impeachment of the divine Wisdom and Pre-
 science, as to be entirely consonant with that
 Wisdom which hath ever been visible and ad-
 mired in God's Regulation and Government of
 Mankind, and particularly in his revealing Doc-
 trines and enacting Laws according to the Ca-
 pacities and Situations of his Creatures, as they
 could bear them.

It becomes not finite Beings upon Earth to
 pretend to assign with Certainty the Reasons of
 divine Permissions; various Solutions have been
 attempted, that some have adopted, others re-
 jected, as must be the Case where Revelation
 hath not afforded any express Declaration, or
 sufficient Light respecting them. But, though
 we have no express Declaration of Scripture
 concerning the Assertions before us, yet have
 we certain Facts evincing the Absurdity and
 Error of them.

Our Author in the Passages transcribed, and
 in those immediately preceding, hath confidently
 affirmed, that "It is as *impossible* that Christ
 " should condemn Polygamy as Adultery, as
 " that he should allow Adultery as lawful Com-
 " merce; and that to suppose God to ever re-
 K 2 " voke,

“ voke, alter, or change the moral Inſtitutes of
 “ the Old Teſtament, is to ſuppoſe ſome Defect
 “ in the Deity, and impeach his Wiſdom and
 “ Preſcience.” Page 363.

Would not any Reader unacquainted with the Scriptures, infer from ſuch confident, not to ſay impious Aſſertions of a Preacher of the Goſpel, that no Inſtance of the Alteration or Repeal of any divine Inſtitutions and Laws can poſſibly be produced from the ſacred Writings ?

Our Author's aſſerting the Immutability of the Law, and denying even Chriſt or the Deity a Power to revoke, alter, or perfect his moral Inſtitutes, induce one to think, that this Writer hath adopted certain metaphyſical Poſitions, which, by uſurping the Place of Truth, often prove the Source of pernicious Error. We muſt ſuppoſe our Author to have ſo long dwelt upon the eternal and unalterable Fitneſs and Unfitneſs of Things, as to have conceived all Change of them an Impoſſibility : when after all abſtract Reasonings and Harangues upon theſe Points, nothing is more evident than that Things are only fit, or unfit, as they relate to the Capacities, Situations, and Condition of Mankind ;
 and

and these Circumstances chang'd or altered, that which was before fit, becomes unfit, and that which before was innocent and virtuous, is now criminal and vicious.

I shall conclude what hath been offer'd, with one Instance, amongst others that might be adduced, that evince the Deity to have altered and even revoked, as well as permitted the Violation of his Institutions and Laws, according to the Capacities, Condition, and Situations of Mankind.—God expressly commanded our first Parents, and their immediate Successors, to increase and multiply, at a Time when their Situation was such that they could not obey this Law, without committing an Act which by a subsequent Law hath been prohibited as a Sin of the deepest Dye.

All personal Intercourse between Brother and Sister, is expressly forbidden by the Levitical Law; and nothing is more severely reprobated and condemned, in the New Testament, than the incestuous Commerce of the Sexes.

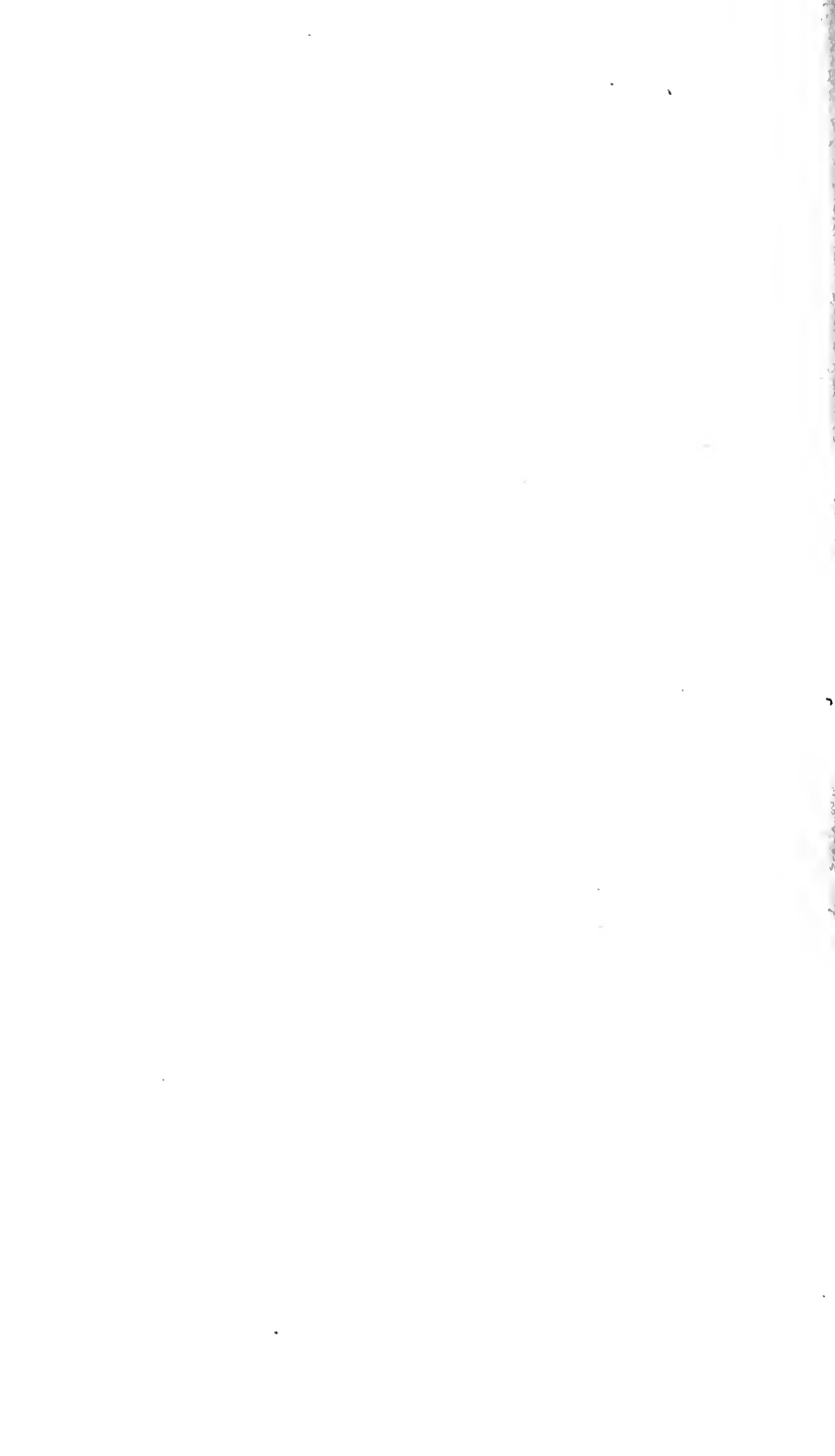
God's Command respecting Population by Persons nearly related, hath therefore been abro-

+

gated

gated by both the Old and New Testament, the Deity having, since their Promulgation, prohibited what before he permitted and enjoined. Nor can such Prohibition, in the least, impeach the Wisdom or Knowledge of the Deity, since the Circumstances and Situation of Mankind, at first, rendered such Permission indispensably necessary.—We therefore can safely affirm, that it is *not* impossible that the Deity should alter or revoke, or repeal at one Time the Law that he made at another.

T H E E N D,



A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

R E V. M R. M A D A N.

A

L E T T E R

TO THE

REV. MR. MADAN,

CONCERNING THE

CHAPTER OF POLYGAMY,

IN HIS

LATE PUBLICATION,

ENTITLED

THE LYPTHORA.

BY A L A Y M A N.

I ALWAYS REVERED TRUTH, WHICH IS THE
GREATEST ORNAMENT OF CIVILISM. ———

Earle Mansfield.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR FIELDING AND WALKER,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

MDCCLXXX.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the following Leaves, delivers them to the Public, with that Caution which the Importance of the Matter requires.—He has been induced to take up the Pen, from the Abhorrence in which he holds the System endeavoured to be established in that Work, which

ADVERTISEMENT.

is now the Subject of his Comment; and from a Conviction that it will not stand the Test of God's Word, when taken in the Aggregate.—How far he has succeeded in his Ideas upon the Occasion, must be left to the Judgment of the Reader.

The Writer is aware of the sacred Ground on which he is treading, while as a human Creature, he presumes to offer any
Illustration

ADVERTISEMENT.

Illustration of the Word of God.

If in this Part of his Undertaking he should be found to have erred, he is not only *willing* but *desirous* to be corrected:—only reserving to himself the Consciousness of not having intended to put any Constructions on the Word of Truth, inconsistent with the Glory and Perfections of it's Author.

For the feeble Manner in which he has supported his own Con-
victions ;

A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

victions ; and for the Inaccuracies
of Stile and Composition, the
Writer craves the Indulgence of
those, into whose Hands this Trifle
may fall.

October 5, 1780.

A L E T-

A

L E T T E R, &c.

R L V. SIR,

TH E work which you have lately delivered to the public, is calculated to call forth the attention of every serious-minded man; as it is fraught with principles, which, if suffered to take place, must produce some very important revolutions in the manners of the world. I have perused the perform-

B

ance

ance with that caution and diligence which it required. I entered upon it without having my judgment perverted with those prejudices which too frequently actuate the multitude.

I am now about to offer an observation or two upon what I conceive to be the most material part of your work ;—I mean the Chapter of Polygamy. I am not unconscious of my own incompetency to enter the lists with you, on the matter of critical disquisition. If our present subject required the aid of scholastic erudition, I should tremble at the idea of hazarding an opinion contradictory to your own.

Believe

Believe me, Sir, this is not the language of compliment, for no one holds in more sincere admiration the depth of your argument, the closeness of your reasoning, or the profundity of your talents ; but you are hardly to be reminded that you have endeavoured to establish your system on the *written word of God*, abstractedly from all other authorities ; consequently any person who can read the Bible with that spirit which renders it *profitable for instruction*, is equal to the defence of any truth, or the opposing any error, with the most learned Draw-canfir who ever wielded a pen in the field of argument.

The chief object of your labours seems to be the justification of POLYGAMY; a mode of conduct, it must be confessed, not unfrequently adopted by the world *in practice*, though rarely hitherto vindicated on *principle*. This task was reserved for a Gentleman of your order and character. You have, in truth, produced authorities innumerable from the Scriptures; but you will pardon me when I intimate my suspicions from what I have read, that you have made those authorities correspond with your system, instead of rendering the system subservient to the *word of truth*; or, to speak in plainer terms, it appears to me that

that you have made the Bible rather the prop, than the foundation, of your hypothesis.

Instances have been produced by you, almost without number, wherein many characters under the Mosaic dispensation lived in a state of polygamy, without it's having appeared that they thereby incurred the displeasure of their God. This cannot be attempted to be denied: but it becomes a question of very great importance, and well worthy of mature consideration, whether these facts were not permitted, as the especial means, to answer some very particular purposes in the theocracy over the Jews.

It

It has been, I believe, conjectured, that this, among other circumstances, was intended to secure the promised Messiah from the imputation of descending otherwise, than from the seed of Abraham, and that so soon as this end was accomplished, the plurality of wives was no longer to be warranted.

To account for the manner in which this conjecture might be supposed to operate, is more than I undertake. Nor indeed can it be for man to enter into the *secret counsels of God*. However, all this conjectural reasoning is of no avail, as it leads to no certain conclusions.

Admitting

Admitting the force to be derived from the instances recorded in the Old Testament, it remains to be proved, that this mode of conduct stands justified under the gospel dispensation.

You have with great propriety repeated to us the argument, that as God is the author of the moral, as well as of the religious world, whatever was by him, at the first foundation of the creation, constituted *moral*, must, according to the eternity of his law, continue to the end. In support of this, you properly introduce the well known assertion of our Lord, who tells us, Matt. v. 17, 18. “ Think not I am come to
 “ destroy

“ destroy the Law, or the Prophets; I
 “ am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

“ For verily I say unto you, ’till
 “ Heaven and Earth pass, one jot, or
 “ one tittle, shall in no wise pass, (*’till*
 “ *all shall be fulfilled **”).

We admit this as an irrefragable position; but in admitting it, we must be cautious in ascertaining what *really* constitutes this law; otherwise, ’in the language of Lord Shaftesbury †, “ We

* It is rather remarkable, Mr. M. when he quotes this authority of our Lord, leaves out this very material part of it—But more of this presently.

† I desire to be properly understood. I do not introduce his lordship as any authority, I only adopt his phrase.

“ may

“ may chance to do God little honour; ”
 “ when we intend him the most.”
 Here the question is, whether the term
 “ LAW,” in this place, comprehends
 within its meaning, the whole of the
 Mosaic Code, whether ceremonial, poli-
 tical, or moral.

If I understand your opinion, you in-
 fer from it, that whatever stands re-
 corded as the Law, of whatever nature
 it may be, under the Mosaic Dispensa-
 tion, is equally obligatory under that of
 Christ. I believe many will differ from
 you; because it can hardly admit of a
 doubt, that there were some laws cal-
 culated for the peculiar direction of the

Jewish nation, in their political capacity, which were not intended as permanent rules of government to the succeeding world; consequently, though these were laws declared by God himself, through the instrumentality of his servant Moses, they did not constitute part of his eternal Law, but were only intended as a portion of their ordinary jurisprudence, accommodated to the nature, and to the temporary exigence of the people.

Few persons, I apprehend, are so unacquainted with their Bible, as to require many proofs to be brought forward to illustrate the propriety of this opinion: —

opinion:—but by way of supporting the argument, we will refer the Reader to one or two cases, which will strike conviction on the subject.

In the first place, the original command, “Increase and multiply,” must, in the earliest instances, have been fulfilled through the medium of the fluxuous commerce:—but when the world had become sufficiently peopled, this no longer was permitted:—and thence it became sin. This is a proof that means were occasionally made use of to forward the divine purposes, which, when completed, ceased to be lawful:—hence it appears, that the law of which

we are speaking, was subject to that variation, which the urgency of events at that time rendered necessary.

Exodus xxi. 28, 29. furnishes us with another instance, proving the propriety of our sentiments on this head. The Word of God there says,

“ If an ox gore a man or a woman
 “ that they die, then the ox shall be
 “ surely stoned, and his flesh shall not
 “ be eaten, but the owner of the ox
 “ shall be quit.

“ But if the ox were wont to push
 “ with his horn in time past, and it
 “ hath been testified to his owner, and
 “ he hath not kept him in, but that he
 “ hath

“ hath killed a man or a woman, the
 “ ox shall be fenced, and his owner also
 “ shall be put to death.”

Is it to be believed that, under the government of the New Testament, this statute continues to operate as an unrevoked command? Surely not. It could only be intended as a part of the civil policy of the Jews, and by no means as a portion of the unchangeable law of God.

Again, we find in Leviticus xxiv. 20.
 it is declared that there shall be “breach
 “ for breach, eye for eye, tooth for
 “ tooth; as he hath caused a blemish
 “ in a man, so shall it be done to him
 “ again.”

“ again.” This law was abrogated by Christ himself, when upon earth.

These extracts from the only infallible guide, *the Word of Truth*, will, I apprehend, by every candid enquirer, be admitted as authorities sufficiently proving, that *every* law which was given by Moses to the Jews, cannot be considered, in *each* instance, as the unchanging standard of God’s will.

It must be allowed, that throughout your Publication, you have proved yourself an indefatigable advocate for the universality and immutability of *every* command which stands recorded on the faithful page of sacred history.

In

In the support of this train of ideas, you have adopted the only method of stamping conviction on the minds of your Readers, *comparing Scripture with Scripture*. In doing this, however, the excess of your zeal has sometimes hurried you into conclusions by no means correspondent with the letter of the text.

It is here that I cannot forbear making what, by some, may be deemed a presumptuous observation, That in several comments, interpretations, and paraphrases, which you have made on the sacred authorities introduced, you have put such constructions on them, as evidently

dently to destroy or pervert their literal meaning. In confirmation of this assertion, I think I can appeal to two or three instances, wherein I am inclined to believe I shall be joined by every impartial and unprejudiced person.

The first instance of this kind to be brought forward, shall be precisely in your own words: “*Ye have heard that*
 “*it hath been said, An eye for an eye, a*
 “*tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you,*
 “*that ye resist not evil, but whosoever*
 “*shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn*
 “*to him the other also, &c.* This refers
 “to Exodus xxi. 24. where the Law of
 “retaliation was enacted, to be admi-
 “nistered

“ nistered by the Judges of Israel in a
 “ judicial way, on the lawful conviction
 “ of offenders: but the Jews, who
 “ were taught to abate every thing,
 “ made this a rule of proceeding in their
 “ own private acts of revenge upon
 “ one another. Such a temper and
 “ disposition as this was very sinful to
 “ indulge, much more to gratify; our
 “ Lord therefore checks this, by teach-
 “ ing patience and forbearance, and
 “ doing good to, rather than injuring
 “ their enemies. BUT STILL HERE IS
 “ NO NEW LAW.”

Now, Sir, without bewildering our-
 selves in the subtleties of sophistry, let

me ask you what can be plainer than this being a *new* law? Our Saviour tells us, “Ye have heard, that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, &c. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil,” &c. Inasmuch as if he had said, you know that it has hitherto been a part of the law, that retaliation should in every instance take place: but the spirit of my government, is of a more benign, and humble nature; I will not that you do so now; for instead of urging your resentments for the injuries you may receive in the world, it is the express command of me, JEHOVAH, who am greater than Moses, to you my Disciples,

ciples, that you resist not, and that ye endue yourselves with that passive courage, which can alone render you meet for the kingdom of Heaven.

I will not hesitate to assert, that so plainly as language can be understood, it is strongly implied that our Lord's doctrine was (in this instance) of a spirit totally repugnant to, and subversive of that of Moses, and consequently, it was to every intent and purpose a *new* law.

Happily for the sentiment which we here embrace, this is not the only authority in illustration of it's propriety. It stands

connected with other passages, equally as strong, if not more in point. That sacred character, who speaking of himself, tells us, that he is "*The way, the truth, and the life,*" has in Matt: v. 43, 44. this remarkable injunction: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, "thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." The same divine person, "*who spake as never man spake,*" utters these expressive words, John xiii. 34.

“ A *new* commandment I give unto you,
 “ that ye love one another; for I have
 “ loved you, that ye also love one ano-
 “ ther.”

If words can convey any probability, it evidently appears from the foregoing in the New Testament, that some of the leading principles of the Mosaic Law were abrogated by Christ himself; and that in their stead a *new* system was set up, of an infinitely more refined and spiritual nature.

In order to justify myself in having brought against you so heavy a charge, as that of destroying the sense of your scriptural quotations, I shall proceed to
 bring

bring forward another instance. A faithful extract from your Work shall be my best testimony.

“ To contend for Christ’s enacting
 “ any *new* law, contrary to the law of
 “ nature, and of the Old Testament, is
 “ to call in question his veracity, and to
 “ place him in a rank of *imposture*, even
 “ below *Mahomet* himself. *Mahomet*
 “ professed to destroy *the law and the*
 “ *prophets*, as they had destroyed all
 “ *preceding systems*: whereas Christ most
 “ solemnly declared, that *heaven and*
 “ *earth could sooner pass, than one jot or*
 “ *tittle pass from the law*. *Think not,*
 “ said he, that I came to destroy the
 “ law.

“ law or the Prophets, I am not come
 “ to destroy, but to fulfil.” So far from
 “ abrogating the *law*, or *rule of life*,
 “ which had been delivered by the hand
 “ of *Moses*, or setting up a *new* law in
 “ opposition to it; he came into the
 “ world to be subject to it in all things,
 “ and so to fulfil the *whole righteousness*
 “ of it, Matt. iii. 15.”

Before I make any animadversions
 upon this passage, I am desirous to
 be informed of the reason, which
 induced you to omit the very ma-
 terial clause, annexed to that autho-
 rity of our Lord, which you here intro-
 duce, that “Heaven and earth could
 “ sooner

“ sooner pass, than one jot or tittle pass
 “ from the law.” You should at any
 rate have given us the whole of the sen-
 tence, if you meant to be candid in your
 inference, but “ you alter the text, and
 “ make a refutable doctrine of your
 “ own.” Our Saviour adds *that*, which
 makes the most material part of the
 argument, *till all shall be fulfilled.*
 Thereby qualifying the general assertion,
 and doubtless intending to convey the
 idea, that a period was approaching,
 when this law was to be done away:
 the epocha of this great event was to
 take place at that moment when *all*
should be fulfilled. What was implied
 by

by this fulfilment ; and its consequences shall be taken notice of hereafter.

If I were to tell my servant, that it was not my intention to *pay him his hire,— till he should have finished his work*, he would rest satisfied ; take away, however, the latter clause, he would then, indeed, have reason to fear that I *never* meant to do him justice. However familiar this mode of reasoning may appear to a person of your superior faculties, I have no doubt of your entering into its principle. I am really apprehensive, from the manner in which you have maimed the text to which we bear reference, you were conscious, that, if taken in its *entire*, literal construction,

E struction,

struction, it would prove too much for your purpose, “ and of course (in your own words on another occasion) prove “ nothing.”

Such a breach of candour, in one calling himself a Minister of Christ, who pretends to rest his doctrines upon the Word of God, should be sufficient to arm his Readers with a caution how they entered upon his Work ; lest, relying upon what they would justly conceive to be the only genuine test of Truth, they should find themselves misled, and that fatally, by the partial conceits of a prejudiced advocate.

Very distant from me be the idea of affixing to the sacred character of the

INCARNATE GOD, the imputation of imposture. I hope the presumption of differing from you in opinion, will not amount to the conviction of such atrocious guilt; for I will confess to you, that, so far as my understanding is capable of receiving instruction from the Word of Truth, my mind is impressed with a conviction that the establishment of Moses, as well legislative as ceremonial, was abrogated by the great sacrifice of Christ. I derive great confidence in maintaining this principle, from the authority of St. Paul, who proves, from the argument of philosophical necessity, that it must have been so, from the very nature of things.

His words on this head are altogether conclusive :

“ If therefore, says he, perfection
 “ were by the Levitical priesthood (for
 “ under *it* the people received the law)
 “ what further need *was there* that
 “ another priest should rise after the
 “ order of Melchisedec, and not be
 “ called after the order of Aaron ?”

“ For the priesthood being changed,
 “ there is made of necessity a change of
 “ the law,” Heb. vii. 11, 12. Again
 farther on, St. Paul, continues to ob-
 serve, “ for there is verily a disannul-
 “ ing of the commandment going be-
 “ fore, for the weakness and unprof-
 “ tableness thereof.”

“ For

“ For the law made nothing perfect,
 “ but the bringing in of a better hope
 “ *did*; by the which we draw nigh un-
 “ to God.” Ver. 18, 19.

I will not so far doubt the comprehension of the reader, as to suppose that these passages require any comment or illustration; language cannot deliver itself in more intelligible terms. They prove the truth of our penitence, with an irresistible demonstration.

I now undertake to say, I have proved that the law of Moses, was not only subject to variation, but that it was in many instances, actually superseded and abolished, by a priest greater than Moses, even him who was “ for ever after the
 “ order

“ order of Melchisedec.” I shall not be suspected of arrogance, or of assuming any personal vanity, in having thus expressed myself, as I have not hazarded the opinion upon a mere *ipse dixit* of any one. I have not maintained my principles upon the authority of any human testimony : but I have built my house upon a rock, against which if the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, it shall not fall, for it is founded upon a rock :—this Rock is CHRIST himself.

From what I have advanced, I hope it will not be unjustly inferred, that I charge the word of God with an incongruity of command. No person is
more

more sincerely convinced than I am, that the law was perfect to those to whom it was given under every part of its respective dispensation; I only contend, that a discriminating line is to be drawn between the partial and temporary system delivered to the Jews, as a peculiar people, and the fixed, eternal, and specific law of God.

It cannot be matter of information to those, who have read the Bible with any attention, when we remark that the history of the Old Testament is little else than a series of events, ordinances, rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices, which were so many prefigurations of those intended to take place under the new covenant:

venant: that the prophecies were a farther confirmation to those hopes, which were derived from the promises held out in the Pentateuch; and that the New Testament, is the history of the completion of those engagements entered into by the Saviour of the world.

The death of the cross constituted that great complete sacrifice, without which the wrath of God could not have been appeased, and of which every antecedent ceremony, had only been the forerunner and the harbinger. It was here, that the form was absorbed in essence:—it was here, the type was swallowed up in the antitype:—it was here, Christ became the corner stone of that edifice,

which having raised a foundation on the ruins of the law, towered above all the ordinances, and the righteousness of the world:—it was here that comprehensive expression of St. John had its authority confirmed—“The law was given by Moses; *but* GRACE and TRUTH came by JESUS CHRIST:”—it was here the “*consummation est*,” took place;—it was here the fulfilment of the law was completed; and consequently, it was here the moral law was superseded, and the ritual law was annihilated.

From the time when our Lord descended upon earth, to the period in which

F

those

those “ stripes were inflicted by which
“ we are healed,” it was a part of his
employment, to confirm the divinity
of his mission, by some of those mar-
vellous acts, which could alone have
their origin from God.—In the midst
of these glorious manifestations of his
power, by which the authenticity of his
sacred character was established and
confirmed, he took every opportunity
to exhort his disciples and followers to
adopt those rules of conduct, from time
to time laid down by him, and recorded
for our instruction in the New Testa-
ment; without which, it was morally
impossible they could be enabled to ap-
ply

ply to themselves, and to experience the all-sufficiency of that atonement, he was about to make for the sins of the world. These rules when collected, constitute a system of ethics, as much superior to, and more spiritual than any preceding system (comprehending even the Mosaic) as the heavens are higher than the earth.

Many of the advocates for the eternity of the Mosaic law, will most likely urge an argument from which they will probably expect to draw a powerful inference, viz. that some parts of the Jewish code were taken up, and incorporated with that of our Lord; we ad-

mit the proposition : but what is to be drawn from it? simply this, that Christ having generally abolished the whole of the Mosaic law, thought proper to adopt some detached spiritual parts of that law, and to make them a part of that establishment, which it was his intention to have observed throughout all ages of the church : and this not *because* they belonged to the law of Moses, but that they corresponded with the nature of his own : by the same parity of reasoning (in order to illustrate great things by small) by which a conqueror having taken possession of a kingdom acquired by the power of his arms, abolishes

lishes the old system of government; and while he is compiling a new code of laws, finds it expedient to incorporate with it some abstracted parts of the former statutes, not because they belonged to the people before they were subdued, but because they were congenial with the spirit of those laws, intended to be put in execution.

In all that I have written on this subject, it has been my endeavour to establish the truth of two or three propositions:—I shall here set them forth:

I. That the *political* law, as delivered to the Jews by Moses their legislator, was *not* eternal.

II. That

II. That the ritual law, was only typical of that sacrifice, which was to be made for the sins of the world by JESUS CHRIST, the INCARNATE GOD.—And

III. That so soon as the serpent's head had been actually bruised by the woman's seed, the ritual law was done away; and the moral law of Moses was superseded by another, of a more pure, spiritual, and refined nature.

I am convinced, that what I have here advanced, can receive its confirmation from an authority no less respectable than the Bible; from these data I shall deduce some inferences, which, if fairly applied,

applied, must lead to the overthrow of your system in favour of polygamy.—It is here, indeed, that the matter between us is brought to the test: you contend, that the plurality of wives having been permitted under the law of Moses, must of course continue to be so under that of Christ. By the principle on which I am reasoning, the practice of polygamy must receive its permission *de novo*, under the covenant of the New Testament, ere it can be warranted.

It is a circumstance very favourable to the opinion which I have endeavoured to establish, that though there were several

veral examples of polygamy among the favourites of God in the Jewish œconomy, which had the sanction of divine authority, there does not appear an instance of the same kind among the glorious company of the apostles, or among any of the blessed characters recorded in the history of Christ;—nor is there any one text in the evangelical or apostolic writings, which if fairly construed, can be said to authorize such an indulgence. Let us, however, appeal to the touchstone itself. I look for no other proof than what you have provided. You have happily supplied

me

me with the text, though we are not agreed in the comment. St. Paul's addressing himself to the Corinthians, gives the following injunction, 1 Cor. vii. 2—5.

“ To avoid fornication, let every man
 “ have his own wife, and let every wo-
 “ man have her own husband.

“ Let the husband render unto the
 “ wife due benevolence, and also the
 “ wife unto the husband.

“ The wife hath not power of her
 “ own body, but the husband; and
 “ likewise also the husband hath not
 “ power of his own body, but the
 “ wife.

G

Defraud

“ Defraud you not one the other, ex-
 “ cept it be with consent for a time,
 “ that ye may give yourselves to fasting
 “ and prayer; and come together again,
 “ that Satan tempt you not for your in-
 “ continency.”

It was a property of one of the fallen
 Angels, to

—————“ make the worse appear
 “ The better reason, to perplex and dash
 “ Maturest counsels.”—————

I cannot, indeed, conceive that you are
 actuated by so unworthy a principle;
 but it will not be exceeding the limits
 of candid criticism to say, that, in your
 hands, the spirit of this passage of St.
 Paul evaporates, and is deprived of all
 intrinsic

intrinsic meaning. Your industry has been exerted to obviate its literal construction, by means of critical disquisitions, forced allusions, and far-fetched conceits*. In my idea, nothing can be clearer

* As the limits of this publication will not permit us to be too diffusive in our quotations, we shall confine ourselves to one extract from Mr. M.'s comment upon this passage of St. Paul. This will be sufficient to shew what shafts a prejudiced author is occasionally obliged to make use of, when he is determined at all hazards, to defend his hypothesis.

“ As for the conclusion against polygamy,
 “ which is drawn from the word *wife*, as well as
 “ the word *husband* being in the *singular* number,
 “ it will not hold; for the scriptures plainly shew
 “ us, that *wife* must frequently be understood in
 “ a distributive sense. A remarkable passage of
 “ this sort is in 1 Tim. iii. 12. Let the *deacons*
 “ be the husbands of ONE WIFE, *μὴς ἑκάστης ἑδξείη.*

clearer than there being a mutual contract on the part of the man and woman,

“ But can any body suppose, that there was to be
 “ but one wife amongst them all? So in the tenth
 “ commandment, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s* WIFE. This (like *ox, ass, house, servant*) must be taken in a *distributive* sense, and
 “ mean any married *woman, or women* whatsoever. So Exod. xxi. 33. *If a man dig a pit, and*
 “ *not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein, the*
 “ *owner of the pit shall make it good, &c.* Are not
 “ *pit, and oxen, and asses,* to be understood? So
 “ in the text, the word *Wife* means any *woman,*
 “ *or women,* who may be married to the man.”—
 EXCELLENT LOGICIAN!

“ The word Husband must be understood in an
 “ *exclusive* sense, because the whole Bible shews
 “ that a woman could have but one husband, here
 “ well expressed by the ἰδιον ἀνδρα.” Mr. M. seeing that the text, if applied in its literal sense, would militate with his doctrine, takes care to let his Reader know, that the word WIFE must be considered in a *distributive*, but the HUSBAND in an

man, *equally* obligatory on both. So much am I satisfied with the plain, easy, and familiar inference to be deduced from this quotation, that I would hazard the truth of my premises upon the construction that should be put on it by any man, who has been enabled to read his Bible with an understanding heart, without having been perplexed with the subtleties and refinements of human learning. It will probably afford some satisf-

an *exclusive* sense. The Gospel was not originally intended to be immersed in such sophisms; it was directed to be preached to the poor, who could not be supposed to enter into the difficulties raised by Schoolmen.—The Scriptures, I am afraid, have suffered more from their friends (so called) than their enemies.

faction

faction to those who have not had the opportunity of perusing your Work, in being informed, that the learned Grotius, and the laborious Dr. Whitby, both inferred from the portion of Sacred Writ now brought forward, that it afforded “ a plain argument against Polygamy.” It is very much to be lamented, that prejudice should have so uncontrollable a power over the human mind. We feel it more sensibly, when it is seen that a man, “ gifted as you are,” cannot escape its influence.

We have another authority of the same respectable character, St. Paul, in our support, who, in his instructions relative

tive

tive to Bishops and Deacons, gives the following opinion concerning their qualifications: "A Bishop must be blameless, *the husband of one wife.*" 1 Tim. iii. 2. Again, in his directions to Titus, whom to ordain Elders, he requires him to see "if any be blameless, *the husband of one wife.*" Tit. i. 6.

I remember to have read an excellent remark, in an able Writer, that when a man is determined to believe, the very absurdity of his doctrine is sufficient to establish his credulity. This observation was never more clearly exemplified than in your comments upon these authorities of St. Paul. Your paraphrase

phrase of them is so curious, that I shall not do my Reader justice, if I omit laying the principal part of it before him. — After speaking of the office of the Bishops and Deacons, you proceed thus :

“ As such an office must moreover
 “ require great attention, those should
 “ be chosen, who are entangled as lit-
 “ tle as possible in the *affairs of this life*,
 “ 2 Tim. ii. 4. Therefore, though
 “ for this reason *single* men might in ge-
 “ neral answer the purpose best, 1 Cor.
 “ vii. 33 : yet it may be expedient in
 “ some instances, to chuse *married* men
 “ into the offices of *Bishops* and *Deacons*.

“ Where

“ Where this is the case, the election
 “ should not be made of such of the
 “ *Christians* as have more than *one wife*,
 “ as such a situation must necessarily
 “ involve the person in more worldly
 “ care, than can be consistent with a
 “ due attention to that care, which must
 “ *come upon them daily*, respecting the
 “ *Church*. Therefore the having more
 “ than *one wife*, should always be confi-
 “ dered as a bar to a man’s election
 “ either to the office of a *pastor*, or a
 “ *deacon*. 1 Tim. iii. 12. for though
 “ that last may not have so extensive a
 “ jurisdiction, yet what with preach-
 “ ing the word — assisting the *bishops*

“ and *elders*—visiting the sick—and dis-
 “ tributing the *church’s* alms to the
 “ poor—*one wife* and family is as much
 “ as can be at all considered consistent
 “ with any tolerable diligence in the
 “ duties of a *deacon’s* office.”

If this is to be called reasoning, I confess it is of that species, which I did not expect would originate in a person of your understanding. Whatever precepts were delivered by Christ or his apostles, were *equally* obligatory upon the *whole* race of mankind. If the plurality of wives was permitted to men in general, the restraining of the ministry from that indulgence, will not be very distant

distant from implying a justification of that principle in the Romish church, which enjoins clerical celibacy. Since that important era, when the true religion was rescued from the tyranny and superstition of Papal Rome, it has rarely been thought that the clergy have been subject to greater restraints, under the gospel of Christ, than any other order of men. To contend that the ministers of the new dispensation are, *from the nature of their function*, precluded from those indulgences which are permitted to the world at large, is *van & prætereâ nihil*: it is expedient, indeed, for the honour of God, and to preserve the holiness of his purposes, that his ambaf-

fadors should keep themselves *unspotted from the world*; that is to say, from its impurities: but from hence it does not follow, that they are exempted from the ordinary comforts of life—such monastic principles are in truth only calculated for that spot where ignorance and bigotry have erected their standard.

Every man, as well as the clergy, has his relative duties, and his engagements in life to discharge; to the execution of which, polygamy, and its consequences, would operate as an impediment, in as great a degree as to that line of character.

But to consider the business of this nether world in a more elevated point of view;

we shall find that every true disciple of Christ, has a *race set before him*, the pursuit of which requires him to be as much disentangled from the affairs of this life, as any avocation upon earth, let its engagements be ever so sacred or important. Every person who is *really* and not *nominally* a christian, feels he has a *salvation to be wrought out with fear and trembling* *. Such is the consequence of this *one thing needful*, that scripture itself labours, as it were, at its description. It has indeed painted it in a dignity and uniformity of metaphor, that is rarely equalled in any writer, antient or modern, sacred or profane:

* Phil. ii. 12.

it sets out with informing the *genuine* christian, that in *pressing toward the mark for the prize of his high calling* *, he has a *fight to be fought* †; that he is engaged in a warfare, wherein *he wrestles not merely against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places* ‡. That *the world, the flesh, and the devil*, are in league against him. That God knowing he is of himself unable to help himself, has *chosen him a soldier* ||, under the banner of JESUS CHRIST, who has condescended to be the *captain and leader of his salvation*. That ere he

* Phil. iii. 4. † 2 Tim. iv. 7. ‡ Eph. vi. 12.
 || 2 Tim. ii. 4.

can be caused to triumph, he must be sensible of his own insufficiency; and that instead of relying on his own exertions, he must be *strong in the LORD and in the power of HIS might* *; and that he may not fall a victim to the powerful confederacy that is opposed to him, he is not only enjoined, but is invited by the endearing calls of affection, to accept the loan, as it were, of *the whole armour of God* †, without which he must necessarily be overcome, but with which he shall be *more than conqueror through him that loved him* ‡.

If this is not an overcharged representation of the state of every man,

* Eph. vi. 10. † Eph. vi. 11. ‡ Rom. viii. 37.

born under the covenant of grace, it will follow of necessity, that your supposition of St. Paul's intending to have a distinction observed between the clergy and laity, touching the ordinary purposes of life, must fall to the ground: as it is undeniably true, that every one of God's creatures has a work to go through, which if he enters upon with more than professional ardour, will suffer him to be as little entangled in the affairs of this life, as the ministration of the duties of the church will the bishops and deacons.

To have been consistent with yourself, and to have given weight to your argument, it behoved you to have brought
 forward

forward the whole of the context, and to have undertaken the proof (a laborious task it must be confessed) that every bishop or deacon, under the direction of St. Paul, must not only have been *the husband of one wife*, while (according to your judgment) the rest of the world were licensed in the indulgence of more ; but that he must be more *blameless*, less addicted to riot or unruliness, than his fellow - christians : more self - governed, — less prone to anger, — less given to wine, — not so much a *striker*, — less swayed by *filthy lucre*, — a greater *lover of hospitality* and of *good men*, — more *sober, just, holy, temperate*, and more tenacious of *the faithful word as he had been taught* : — This, I say Sir,

I

should

should have been proved *altogether*, before you could reasonably and fairly have established a principle on a *detached* part of it.

Taking the whole of this exhortation of the apostle, into one comprehensive point of view, nothing in my idea can be more satisfactory, than the plain intelligent lesson that it was intended to afford. The ministers of Christ being charged with the commission of publishing the glad tidings of the gospel, and of enforcing the necessity of obedience to the commands of its author, it became expedient that they should prove themselves
 worthy

worthy of such an embassy, by the purity of their manners, and the excellency of their lives: thereby (as the apostle expresses it, and through the medium of sound doctrine,) convincing the gainfayers. These, indeed, ought to be the principal traits in the characters of those who are called to the ministry: but it is not to be understood, that they are expected to be more exemplary in their conduct, than the rest of the christians. These are called upon to prove the sincerity of their professions, by the most steady observance of every principle laid down in the gospel.—In short, it equally behoves every member of

Christ's body, to be correspondent with their vocation, whether in, or out of the church—such was evidently the meaning of the apostle Paul.

So far as the doctrine of polygamy must stand or fall upon the authority of holy writ, I will here be contented to rest the subject. In the first instance, proofs have been adduced, that the Mosaic law was superseded by the death of Christ: and of course, that with that abolition, the plurality of wives ceased to be lawful, unless it should have received a fresh permission under the new covenant. That no such permission was either *implied* by the practice of it,
by

by any of the sacred persons in the history of Christ and his apostles,—or expressly licensed by any direct authority on their part is equally clear; the very contrary appears to have been the case.

I derived great satisfaction in perceiving upon the face of your work, that my ideas on this head were in unison with those of such characters as HUGO GROTIUS, DEAN DELANY, DOCTOR WHITBY, DICTIONARY CHAMBERS, and JUDGE BLACKSTONE, men who with the same zeal for truth with yourself,—the same purity of sentiment,—the same capacity of discernment, and the same authorities before them, were clearly,

ly,

ly, decisively, and “*gravely*” * of opinion, that “Polygamy is condemned by the law of the New Testament.”

It is by no means a part of my purpose to enter upon the business on any other ground, than that on which

* Mr. M. in a note, thus expresses himself: Judge Blackstone very *gravely* says, Comm. vol. I. p. 436. “Polygamy is condemned by the law of “the New Testament.” A minister of Christ affecting to laugh at a man, who by posterity will be esteemed the ornament of the age and nation which he lived in, for maintaining an opinion, whose propriety since the christian æra, has ever been confirmed by all civilized persons, is such a violation of common decency, as cannot fail to raise the anger of every one, whose judgment has not been perverted by prejudice. The indignation attending such a conduct can only be heightened by reflecting on the function of the character by whom it is exhibited.

I have

I have already ventured. Scripture is the only criterion by which questions of this kind can be ascertained: through the influence of that authority, my own convictions are satisfied.

To those however who reason upon the principle of nature, and of general propriety, there presents itself a very extensive field for curious speculation; men of leisure, who are deeply read, have an ample opportunity of exerting their talents: and thereby, under God, may be the means of refuting a doctrine so dangerous to society, in whose support no small portion of human ingenuity has been made use of.

By

By such, for instance, it might be enquired, (I am aware with what humility) that if the plurality of wives was permitted from the beginning, how came it, that the Deity confined the first man Adam to one only? particularly at a period when, in the course of things, it may naturally be supposed, the world required greater channels of propagation. It might be matter worthy of investigation to have it ascertained, that in the union of man and woman, Christ having directed *the twain* to become *one flesh*, and declared that *those whom God had joined together, no man should put asunder*, by what association of ideas a
 man

man can be justified in forming a subsequent connection with another woman.—It might be contended, that as there is but one portion of affection in the human breast, a division of it among a variety of objects is tantamount to the parties being put asunder: it might be urged with some weight of argument, that the more highly fraught this affection is, it is the less capable of being diverted from the first subject. And the advocate for a plurality of wives might fairly be called upon, to prove, that from the proportion of numbers between the males and females, a natural inference

was to be deduced, favourable to his opinion*.

But after all, Sir, laying aside the business, as matter of theological controversy, let me be permitted to enquire of you, what could induce you to exercise your great abilities on such a subject?—Admitting that you stamp conviction on the minds of your religious readers, to what end does it lead?—

Granting

* A gentleman in holy orders has assured me, and from his general knowledge I can rely on his information, that if the Bills of Mortality are accurately compared for the last fifty years, it will be found, that, one year with another, the ratio runs about fourteen males to thirteen females; a fact, which, if admitted, proves, that, in the *nature of things*, Polygamy cannot be warranted.

Granting every thing that you have advanced, what has been proved but this — that the plurality of wives is not a duty enjoined, but an indulgence permitted: before you entered upon the subject, you must have been conscious that the genius, the manners, the temper, and the laws of your country, were in direct opposition to your system. You could not flatter yourself that any arguments you could make use of, were sufficient to lay aside a principle in society, founded in reason, and confirmed by beneficial experience. The weak and the wicked will be happy to justify themselves by any plausible authority,

when they violate one of the chief bonds of social comfort: hence the effects of your labours militates with those of St. Paul, who enjoins *every soul to be subject to the higher powers.*

I should here take my leave of you, and of the subject, if I had not on my hands a debt of gratitude, which I am desirous to discharge. It is to those single gentlemen, who shall have done me the honour to peruse this trifling performance. I cannot be more sincere in my return for such an obligation, than by apprising them of, and consequently warning them against, those dangers and inconveniencies to which
they

they subject themselves, when they enter into that state, which the chief of our Poets has beautifully painted as the

“ ————— Sole propriety
 “ In Paradife of all things common else.”

The transcribing a long note, will furnish me with an opportunity, which cannot fail to derive additional weight, from its having made its appearance under the venerable sanction of your respectable authority.

“ It is to be feared that there are not a few females, who (like other monopolists) take the advantage of the poor husband’s situation, to use him as they please; and this for pretty much the same reason, why the as in the fable insulted and kicked the poor *old lion*—because it is not in their power to *resent* it as they *ought*.

“ The advice which king *Abasuerus* received from his wise men, the seven princes of *Media*
 “ and

“ and *Persia*, upon queen *Vashti*’s disobedience,
 “ would have an excellent effect could it be fol-
 “ lowed. Many an high spirited *female* would
 “ have too cogent a reason against the indulgence
 “ of a refractory disposition not to suppress it.
 “ Her *pride*, which is now the husband’s *torment*,
 “ would then become his *security*, at least in a great
 “ measure; for *pride* is a vice, which, as it tends
 “ to *self-exaltation*, maintains uniformly its own
 “ principle—not to bear the thoughts of a *rival*.
 “ See *Esther* i. 10, &c. As things are with us, the
 “ poor man must grind in *mola asinaria* during life.

“ It is certain, that nothing can be a release from
 “ the bond of marriage itself but *death*, or an act
 “ of *adultery* in the wife; but that a man is at all
 “ events bound to maintain the *external* bond, by
 “ cohabiting with a woman, who, instead of being
 “ an *help-meet for him* (as we say) becomes, by the
 “ violence and perverseness of her temper and dis-
 “ position, a constant and increasing torment; and
 “ this after the most friendly, tender, and kind ad-
 “ monitions, is not consonant either to Scripture
 “ or reason.

“ Some will tell us, that such a thing must be
 “ looked upon as happening by the will of PROVI-
 “ DENCE, as a chastisement or visitation from
 “ heaven, and therefore must be submitted to, and
 “ endured.

“ So

“ So is sickness from the hand of God; so are
 “ afflictions of all kinds, and certainly to be sub-
 “ mitted to with patience and resignation; yet to
 “ use means of recovery from sickness, and of deli-
 “ very from trouble and affliction, are apparent du-
 “ ties, and why not in the other case?”

How far this train of sentiment can be reconciled with a liberal mind, I leave those who possess it to determine. For my own part I am free to confess, that the ideas appear to me so uncandid, that I am surprized they could find for their author, a man of your education, character, and connections. It has ever been supposed that the husband is the head; scripture and reason both concur in allowing him the superiority. Your experience in the world cannot
 have

have left you uninformed, that tyranny is not unfrequently the concomitant of power. I am sorry to say it of my own sex, but I am fearful that women have more urgent reason to complain of the men, than men have of the women. At least, I believe, the ballance is pretty even between them.

I now draw to a conclusion: I have thrown together my ideas on the subject of polygamy: they are in truth, very crude, and indigested. The vain presumption of removing your prejudices, or of giving instruction to the learned, was by no means the inducement of my taking up the pen. The object of my
en-

endeavours has been simply to throw some information in the way of the plain and unlettered ; and to oppose, as far as lies in the power of an obscure citizen, the dangerous consequences that may arise from your publication. Though, indeed, I despair of there being public virtue sufficient either in our seminaries of piety, learning, and devotion, or on the bench of ——— to take a proper notice of the work, entitled *Thelyphthora* ; I will hope, that there are some individuals, whose inclination and ability will so far co-operate, as to step forward to expose the fallacy of your reasoning, and to render inert the effects which might otherwise be derived from

L

it ;

it; so that, according to the elegant metaphor of a deceased nobleman, the poison* and the antidote may go together.

The injuries which your labours will probably do to the world, ought by you to have been foreseen. You owe much to the public. You have a great atonement to make. Martin Luther, the great Protestant Reformer, set you an illustrious example—it had been well if you had followed it. His dying prayer was, that
every

* The mention of the word poison, reminds me of an anecdote not unworthy of being known.—A very faithful servant of God, a diligent labourer in the vineyard of Christ, being asked if he had read Mr. M.'s publication, replied in the negative; being urged to give his reason, he made this shrewd, intelligent, and significant reply, “Because I am
“unwilling to try how much arsenic my constitution will bear.”

every syllable he had written might be destroyed, lest (such was the purity of *his* zeal) it should be found his sentiments had militated with, and thereby done dishonour to the Word of God. If such was *his* fear, even in so GLORIOUS A CAUSE as that wherein he was engaged, how much more would it have become you to have been actuated by such sentiments in an undertaking, which, if adopted by the world, must lead to the introduction of licentiousness, and must terminate in the overthrow of every principle of social comfort. The very infidel (a solecism in the history of religion) will avail himself of the detached parts of the Bible, with which you have supplied

supplied him, to justify himself in measures, which in his conscience he knows to be contrary to the “*moral fitness of things.*”

I here take my leave of you, with applying to myself part of your own words. — “Here, Reader, I have lifted up the *hive*, and out has flown the *swarm*; not a *swarm* of useful, industrious *bees*, but a swarm like that in *Egypt*, which was *grievous*, and *corrupted the land.*”

I am, with due respect,

Reverend Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

A LAYMAN.

